

From the Britannia.

The Bonaparte Letters and Despatches; from the Originals in his Private Cabinet. 2 vols. Saunders & Otley.

THE conviction is now general that a man may be most truly judged by his own revelations. If he has acted an important part in life, if his correspondence has been active and extensive, treating of many subjects, addressed to many parties, and often written on sudden emergencies, without time for reflection, it will certainly exhibit the movements of his mind, and reflect his character, whatever that character may be. Furnished with his letters, we are enabled to enter with him into his secret cabinet, to view his dealings with the different parties he had to conciliate or oppose, and to witness the changes made by circumstances in his sentiments. The evidence on which we try him is furnished by neither friend nor foe, but by himself. It is of all testimony the most unexceptionable, for no man can be constantly false to himself. Hence the value of those collections which have been lately formed of the letters and despatches of illustrious characters. Cromwell, Marlborough, Wellington, and Nelson are made to tell the story of their own lives without premeditation or art. To those names we have now to add that of Napoleon Bonaparte.

These collections are too voluminous to become popular, though they may be applied to popular uses. They require some skill and much time to extract their essence. What is material is often mixed with what is purely local and transient. A trait of character, or a principle of policy, may be overlaid with details for the march of a battalion or for victualling a corps. There is a large proportion of chaff to the grain. Nor can these documents be studied in detached portions. The evidence of one part is required to moderate, correct, or explain the evidence of another. A superficial glance will observe in them much that is inconsistent, but deeper attention will show that the inconsistency, if it exists at all, is a part of the mind of the author, and therefore to be taken into account, as well as other peculiarities, in estimating his character. As materials for history these collections are invaluable, and, if judiciously employed, they may be made the means of conveying just ideas to those who have had not leisure or opportunity for a careful perusal of works so voluminous.

It is an evil inseparable from all publications of the kind, that they must contain a mass of matter of very subordinate interest. But, in general, whatever is written by a person of distinguished capacity will bear, in some way or other, the stamp of a superior mind. In each fragment of his correspondence there will be some originality of thought, some decision of touch, or some involuntary impress of his genius to give it value and mark its identity. Naturalists can, from the single bone of an animal, draw out the whole skeleton, and assign the species to which it belongs. Critics have less certain ground to go upon. Yet a letter of Cromwell, Wellington, or Napoleon will ordinarily contain

within itself something to determine its authorship, and to establish it as part of the mind from which it proceeded.

The two volumes before us contain the correspondence and despatches of Napoleon from his taking the command of the army of Italy to the treaty of Campo Formio. The collection was known before, and has been largely quoted from, but it has not, to our knowledge, been previously published in this country. The first document is dated March 6, 1796; the last November 7, 1797. In those twenty months he accomplished his most brilliant operations; and by a succession of victories, so rapid, glorious, and decisive as to be without parallel in all the annals of warfare, he laid deep and sure the foundations of his throne of empire.

The earlier documents are curious for the evidence they furnish of the deplorable destitution of the army of Italy when Napoleon assumed the command of it. A large proportion of the soldiers, without arms, clothing, shoes, ammunition, or food, seem to have more resembled troops of ragged banditti than battalions advancing to invasion and conquest. Bonaparte saw all the difficulties of his situation, but he saw that conquest would overcome them. His first care was to impress on the mind of the Directory his ability to cope with the dangers and perplexities of his command. Another man would have shrunk from encountering them. He grappled with them boldly. In his first despatch to the Directory he writes:—

“The administrative situation of the army is deplorable, but not desperate. The army will henceforth eat good bread, and will have butcher's meat, and it has already received some advances on its arrears of pay.”

A week later he remarks in the same strain:—

“The army is in a state of frightful destitution. I have still great obstacles to surmount, but they are surmountable. Want has authorized discipline, and without discipline there is no victory. I hope that this will speedily be set to rights; the aspect of things is already changing; in a few days we shall be engaged with the enemy.”

This language was calculated, while it revealed the distresses of the army, to re-inspire the Directory with confidence as to its fate. By their choice of a general they had removed all responsibility from their own shoulders. Another commander would have teased them for arms, for food, for clothing, just as the generals of Napoleon implored him for succors of all kinds. He trusted to his own efforts alone, and took the care of providing for the wants of his soldiers entirely on himself. It was not till he felt his position secure by repeated victories that he demanded from the Directory supplies and reinforcements. He made himself indispensable to them as a servant before he assumed the authority of a master. Their feelings for some months must have been that of profound thankfulness at having found a commander who suited them so well.

The destitution of the army was indeed greater than Napoleon had represented it. From the first he made up his mind that nothing was to be got from the home government, and that to victory he

must look for relief from want. The Directory sent forth their troops without the slightest thought of furnishing them with supplies. The exchequer was empty, all resources were exhausted, and the armies were told to supply their wants from the countries they invaded. This new principle in warfare was attended with frightful privation; and not all the genius, victories, and resources of Napoleon could prevent his soldiers from suffering the horrors of aggravated famine. On the 15th of April, three days after the victory of Montenotte, La Harpe writes to Bonaparte:—

“Notwithstanding your promises, general, the troops are without bread; they are sinking under fatigue and inanition. Send us something, at least some bread and a little brandy, for I am fearful of being a prophet of disaster; but if we are attacked to-morrow the troops will fight ill, for want of physical strength.”

Either La Harpe's division was one of the worst in the army, or he wanted firmness to view its sufferings unmoved. On the 17th of April he writes to Napoleon, tendering his resignation:—

“The boundless licentiousness to which the troops give themselves up, and which cannot be remedied, because we have not a right to order a scoundrel to be shot, is hurrying us into ruin, dishonoring us, and preparing us for the most cruel reverses. * * * In consequence, I beg you to accept, general, my resignation; and to send an officer to take the command entrusted to me, for I would rather dig the ground for a livelihood than be at the head of men who are worse than were the Vandals of old.”

Napoleon sent supplies when he could, and hopes and cheering promises when he could despatch nothing better. He constantly held out the prospect of conquest to the troops as the only means of bettering their condition. He taught them to expect no relief but from their own valor. But after an action the men committed the most frightful excesses, and were often disappointed in their expectation that victory would give them plenty. A few extracts from the despatches of Bonaparte's generals will prove instructive, as showing the condition of his army after its earliest successes:

“*Heights of St. Michael, April 20, 1796.*”

“Several corps have been without bread for these three days: the soldiers abused this pretext to abandon themselves to the most horrible pillage. The corps have somewhat rallied, but there are still wanting a considerable number of men, who have gone off to get provisions in all possible ways. I am ill seconded by the officers, who pillage too: they were drunk yesterday, like the others.”

“If bread does not reach us, the soldiers will not march. We are still in want of a great many muskets; there were nearly 2,000 deficient before the affair.”

“*SERRURIER.*”

“*Cairo, April 20, 1796.*”

“Unless we receive bread to-night, we shall be without an ounce to-morrow, and, should it even arrive, there would not be sufficient to give a quarter of a ration to the three brigades and to the cavalry.”

“All the agents, storekeepers, and others, in all the administrations, are making requisitions at random; the peasants of these parts are absolutely ruined; the soldiers are destitute, and their leaders disconsolate; rogues only are enriching themselves; there is not a moment to be lost, general, if you

would save the army, if you would not have us be considered in Piedmont as men worse than the Goths and Vandals.”

“Since the 23d of last month the 6th has received but two rations and a half; and the others have suffered in like manner. It is not possible to repress the men in this miserable state; your army is about to be worn down by disease; and, whenever we march, by the Barbets; for it cannot be doubted that the inhabitants, driven to despair, will arm and slaughter every French straggler.”

“Above all, general, it is urgent that you should put a stop to that host of illegal requisitions; or, if they must continue, it would be better to assemble the inhabitants, shoot them, and then finish plundering, for it comes to the same point; they must be starved to death.”

“Bread! bread! and again bread!”

“*LAHARPE.*”

“*Camp of Dego, April 20, 1796.*”

“Indiscipline has reached the highest pitch. I am using all possible means to maintain order, but they are of no avail. There is no kind of excess which the soldiers do not indulge in, and all that I can do is useless. I therefore request you, general, to be pleased to accept my resignation; for I cannot serve with soldiers who know neither subordination, nor obedience, nor law, and who are every moment threatening their officers and their commanders.”

“*CHAMBARLAC,*”

“*Chief of the 70th demi-brigade.*”

“*Dego, April 20, 1796.*”

“Indiscipline and insubordination are at their height; the excesses perpetrated by the soldiers cannot be checked. For several days past, I have been employing all the means in my power to bring them back to obedience and subordination; all my efforts having proved unavailing, and finding myself wholly unable to reduce them to order, I request you, general, to accept my resignation.”

“*MAUGRAS.*”

“*Monte Barcaro, April 22, 1796.*”

“It is two o'clock and nothing has arrived; the soldiers are more busily engaged than ever in theft and plunder; peasants have been murdered by our men, and soldiers have been killed by the peasants. Words cannot adequately describe the horrors that are committed. The camps are almost deserted, the soldiers roaming over the country more like ferocious beasts than men; those who do not join in the atrocities patrolling the while, with superior officers at their head; it is to no purpose to drive them from one place; they only run to murder at another. The officers are in despair. The soldiers are culpable, but those who reduce them to the alternative of plundering or starving are much more guilty. In the name of humanity, in the name of liberty, which wretches are assassinating, rescue us from this situation! Send us wherewithal to prolong our miserable existence without committing crimes.”

“Can there then exist a Providence, since its avenging bolts do not crush all the villains who are at the head of the administration?”

“*LAHARPE.*”

Napoleon's firm nerves were not shaken by these complaints. Action was his remedy for mutiny, for famine, for sickness, for every ill that could afflict the troops. His answer to their complaints was to precipitate them against the foe; and it heightens the merits of his combinations that, fighting under

every disadvantage, with men worn out by hunger, and frequently without arms or shoes, he was constantly victorious against the superior forces of the foe, though well disciplined and well provided.

The condition of the army was improved as it advanced into the heart of Italy. But the errors and corruption of the administrative officers were too deeply seated to admit of instant cure. In August, 1796, Despinis complains of the cowardice of his troops, and accounts for it by their destitution:—

"Brescia, August 4, 1796."

"I should betray my duty were I not to tell you the whole truth: there is no good, no resource to be hoped from the eighth brigade; it is so infected with cowardice that, on the firing of a single musket by one of our sentinels, this morning, at an Austrian prisoner who had appeared on the road, half the corps was already in flight. We, General Bertin and I, and all the brave, join to beseech you to put this corps in its place, or at least to spare us the evident risk of being dishonored with it, and of being prevented from justifying your confidence. At any rate the division of which you have given me the command cannot exist in the state of disorganization in which it is at present. It is in want of everything, and not a creature to furnish it with supplies, no commissary of war, no agent, not even a medical officer and an hospital for the wounded. It is always the case that, when a prey to distresses, and suffering all sorts of privations, the soldier is disheartened; and it is this mischievous impression too that we ought to hasten to destroy.

"DESPINIS."

Almost at the same time Augereau complains of the deplorable state of a corps who had joined his division:—

"Head-quarters, Verona, August 23, 1796."

"The 29th demi-brigade has joined my division, which I reviewed on the 3d and 4th inst. Indeed, the condition of that 29th is pitiable: it has at most a hundred bayonets; it has no clothes, no shoes; I found in it volunteers under arms without any covering but a shirt and linen trousers. These troops must necessarily be armed, equipped, and clothed, or left in the rear, for they cannot be brought before the enemy in this state, occasioned by the carelessness of the chief. They are, nevertheless, soldiers who, on some occasions, have exhibited proofs of bravery, and on whom one might rely; which ought to stimulate our anxiety to put them in order, and render them fit to do good service. Make, I beg of you, all the efforts you can to this end."

Three months later yet, and after Napoleon had gained some of his most splendid successes, his brother, Louis Bonaparte, represents his troops as literally naked:—

"Lavis, Nov. 3, 1796."

"The troops are without shoes, without coats—in short, they are naked, and are beginning to be daunted; they looked yesterday with respect at the fine appearance of the Austrians in order of battle; they are in the snow; their state ought to be taken into most serious consideration. With what consequences would not our defeat be attended! The officers in general are worn out; there were some who, amidst the fire, talked only of retiring to their homes."

In another place Louis Bonaparte notices the desertion of some soldiers who had left their corps "in a rage on account of their bare and bleeding feet." Yet these troops, destitute as they were, beat five of the finest armies Austria could bring into the field, and made the world resound with the successes of France.

Napoleon was not indifferent to the peculations of the army agents and contractors. There are in these volumes a thousand proofs of the vigilance with which he watched them, and of his care for the soldiers' interests. The republican administration was corrupt in all its branches; and Bonaparte found it impossible, with the urgent calls on his time, to collect proofs of the villany of the agents, who, in all their schemes, hung together. On his own responsibility he arrested several; and denounced others to the Directory, charging them as guilty, on his honor, though not supplied with proofs. They found him inaccessible to bribes. Of one superior agent he writes to the Directory:—

"Thevenin is a robber; he affects an insulting profusion; he has made me a present of several very fine horses, for which I had occasion, but for which I have not been able to make him accept payment. Let him be arrested and kept six months in prison; he can pay a war-tax of 500,000 francs in money; this man does not perform his duty."

At another time he calls for severe measures against the universal corruption that prevailed. Writing to the Directory in January, 1797, he calls for a despotic magistracy to examine into the army accounts and keep the agents in check:—

"Everything is sold. The army consumes five times as much as it needs, because the storekeepers forge orders and go halves with the commissaries of war. The principal actresses of Italy are kept by the *employés* of the French army; luxury, licentiousness, and peculation are at their height."

When he felt his power he spoke to the Directory in a more decisive tone, and accused them of protecting extortioners:—

"I have written to the treasury relative to its indecent conduct with Flachat and Co. Those fellows have done us infinite injury in carrying off millions, and thereby placed us in the most critical situation. For my part, if they come into the arrondissement of the army, I will have them put in prison till they have restored to the army the five millions of which they have robbed it. Not only does the treasury care nothing about furnishing the army with its pay and supplying its wants, but it even protects the rogues who come to the army to feather their nests."

With vast exertions he succeeded in introducing a system of greater order and regularity into the financial and commissariat departments of the army. He personally inspected the stores furnished. When he ordered shoes for the men, he was not satisfied without inspecting specimens himself. When from the shortness of provisions their rations were reduced, he directed that the difference should be made up to them in money.

It is not often in these papers that we find Napoleon speaking of himself. We discover his activity by incidental notices here and there. "Infuse greater activity into your correspondence," he writes to the French minister at Venice. "Have daily accounts rendered to you," he writes to Vanbois when governor of Leghorn, "and inform me

regularly of all that passes." "Five of my horses are dead of fatigue," he writes to Salicetti; "I cannot write to the Directory; I beg of you to inform it of what you see, and of what Louis will tell you verbally." "I do not hear from you so often as I wish;" "Let me know everything," are his constant exclamations. He found time for the minutest regulations. He enjoins the commanders of his garrisons what company they are to keep, and in what style they are to live. However distant might be the divisions of his army, he seemed constantly present among them, and was never absent where the true blow was to be struck. Succor always arrived where succor was most needed.

He had formed a correct judgment of the character of the Directory, and knew how to obtain its confidence. With success, he managed to remit it supplies. Before he had been six weeks in Italy, he proposes to send a million of francs to the army of the Rhine. A little later and the Directory find themselves able to draw on him for ten millions. He knew the spirit of his employers, and sold peace dearly. He writes to the Directory, June 7:—

"I shall soon be at Bologna. Is it your pleasure that I should then accept from the pope, as the price of an armistice, twenty-five millions of contributions in cash, five millions in kind, three hundred pictures, statues and manuscripts in proportion, and that I insist on the release of all patriots confined for revolutionary acts? I shall have sufficient time to receive your orders, since I shall not be at Bologna for these ten or fifteen days."

"Who can wonder that the Directors were in raptures at their choice? On the 8th of June he writes:—

"A commissioner of the Directory is come for the contributions. A million has been despatched to Basle for the army of the Rhine. You have eight millions at Genoa: you can reckon upon that. Two millions more were going off for Paris; but the commissary assured me that it is your intention that the whole should go to Genoa."

Under date of July 5 he writes to the commissioner of marine at Toulon:—

"Eighty carriages loaded with hemp are about to start from Bologna for Nice, where they will be at your disposal.

"I have written to the minister of the marine to inform him that he might send commissioners to Rome, to receive to the amount of 4,000,000 in cash."

On the part of the Directory, Reveillere-Lepeux writes back to Napoleon, August 23, 1796:—

"The supplies which the army of Italy pours into the national treasury are the more valuable the more violent the crisis: they have contributed to thwart the plots of our internal enemies."

The Directors sold themselves to Bonaparte. He saw his advantage, and soon asserted the superiority of command. When it was proposed to associate Kellerman with him, he decisively refused. His answer shows both his resolution and his judgment. To Carnot he says, May 14, 1796:—

"Kellerman will command the army as well as I, for nobody is more convinced than myself that the victories are owing to the courage and daring of the army; but I cannot help thinking that to unite Kellerman with me in Italy would ruin every-

thing. I should not like to serve with a man who deems himself the first general in Europe; and I think, besides, that it is better to have one bad general than two good ones. War is like government—it is an affair of tact."

To the Directory he is yet more explicit:—

"If you impose fetters of all kinds upon me; if I must refer at every step to the commissioners of the government; if they have a right to change my movements, to take from me or to send me troops, expect no more good. If you weaken your means by dividing your forces; if you break the unity of military conception in Italy; I tell you with grief, you will have thrown away the fairest occasion for imposing laws upon Italy."

"In the position of the affairs of the republic in Italy, it is indispensable that you should have a general who possesses your entire confidence; if it were not to be myself I should not complain, but I would strive to redouble my zeal to deserve your esteem in the post that you should confer upon me. Every one has his own method of making war. General Kellerman has more experience, and will do better than I; but, both together there, we should do nothing but mischief."

The next despatches brought news of great successes, and the Directory yielded, avowing the confidence it had in his talents and republican zeal. He frequently arraigns the measures of the Directory with great bitterness. "Our administrative conduct at Leghorn," he says, "is detestable. It makes us pass in the eyes of all Italy for Vandals." To reproaches of this kind the Directory replied submissively. Reveillere-Lepeux writes July 31, 1796:—

"You possess, citizen-general, the confidence of the Directory: the services which you are daily rendering give you a right to it; the considerable sums which the republic owes to your victories prove that you attend at once to glory and to the interests of your country."

In this campaign he began accustomed to consider himself as entitled to the first consideration of the state. He calls continually for reinforcements, and uses persuasions, threats, and menaces to obtain them. "The more men you send me, the better I shall be able to feed them." When expecting the assault of a fresh army from Austria, he writes, Oct. 1, 1796:—

"If the preservation of Italy is dear to you, citizens directors, send me all these succors. I want also 20,000 muskets: but these things must arrive, and not be like all that is promised to this army, but never comes."

The Directory were liberal in their promises. They continually write, expect 10,000 men from the army of the ocean, 10,000 from the Rhine, &c., &c. But Napoleon expected them in vain. The war administration was both corrupt and incapable, and promises were nearly all that Napoleon received. His mortification rose into rage at finding himself so often deceived. Desertion must have prevailed on the most extensive scale. He constantly says, "Do not expect more than half the troops you send to reach me. The others will drop off on the road."

His style of composition is remarkable. It is abrupt, stern, and commanding. The opening of his letter to the minister of the king of Sardinia is very characteristic:—

"I am no diplomatist, sir; I am a soldier: you will forgive my frankness. In different parts of his majesty's dominions the French are murdered,

robbed. By the treaty of peace, the king, who is bound to grant us a passage through his territories, ought to make it safe for us, &c.

"People judge of men, sir, by their actions alone: the integrity of the king is universally known; yet one is almost forced to think that there are political reasons which cause atrocities so revolting to be encouraged or at least tolerated."

His perception of character seems to have been instinctive. He formed his judgment of his officers at once, and rarely appears to have been mistaken. The note in which he gives his opinion of his generals of division to the Directory is striking:—

"Head-quarters, Brescia, August 13, 1796.

"I think it useful, citizens directors, to give you my opinion of the generals employed in this army. You will see that there are very few who can be of service to me.

"Berthier: talents, courage, character—everything in his favor.

"Augereau: a great deal of character, courage, firmness, activity; habit of war; is beloved by the soldiers; lucky in his operations.

"Massena: active, indefatigable, daring; has quickness of apprehension and promptness in decision.

"Serrurier: fights like a soldier, takes nothing upon himself, firm, has not a very good opinion of his troops; is ill.

"Despinois: soft, without activity, without daring, has not fighting habits, is not liked by the soldiers, does not fight at their head; has, for the rest, hauteur, intelligence, and sound political principles: fit to command in the interior.

"Sauret: good, very good soldier, but not enlightened enough to be general; not lucky.

"Abatucci: not fit to command fifty men.

"Garnier, Meunier, Cassabianca: incapable, not fit to command a battalion in so active and so serious a war as this.

"Macquart: a brave man, no talents, fiery.

"Gauthier: fit for an office (bureau); never was engaged in war.

"Vaubois and Sahuguet were employed in the fortresses; I have transferred them to the army: I shall learn to appreciate them; they have both acquitted themselves extremely well of the commissions that I have hitherto given them; but the example of General Despinois, who was all right at Milan, and all wrong at the head of his division, orders me to judge of men by their actions.

"BONAPARTE."

All his despatches are short, but full of matter. He never fences with his subject. He expresses himself with clearness and precision, but in few words. His account of the defeat of the last army Austria on this occasion sent into the field, is in his usual energetic style:—

"Thus during the last three or four days the fifth army of the emperor is entirely destroyed. We have taken 23,000 prisoners, among whom are one lieutenant-general and two generals; 6,000 men killed or wounded; sixty pieces of cannon, and about twenty-four colors. All the battalions of Vienna volunteers have been made prisoners: their colors are embrodered by the empress herself. General Alvinzi's army was nearly 50,000 strong: part of it had come post from the heart of Austria. In all these affairs we have had but 700 men killed and about 1,200 wounded. The army

is animated with the best spirit, and in the best dispositions."

Occasionally short sentences of profound wisdom and general applicability are found in his hurried letters. Alluding, April 16, 1797, to the hesitation of Moreau in crossing the Rhine, he says:—"He who is fearful of losing his glory is sure to lose it." And again:—"Never since history has recorded military operations has a river proved a real obstacle." His sarcasm is cutting. Of Genoa he remarks, it will be easy to attach it to France, "if no attempt is made to extract from them their money, which is the only thing they care about." He asks the Directory to send him "some cavalry officers who have fire, and a firm resolution never to make a scientific retreat." Fond of daring actions, he could yet discriminate between rashness and decision. "That man," he says, speaking of Beaulieu, "has the daring of madness and not that of genius." Noticing the approach of the dog-days in Italy, which would stop all operations, he exclaims:—"Miserable beings that we are, we can only observe nature, not overcome it." Relating a stratagem he had formed for the surprise of Mantua, he expresses himself doubtful of its result:—"The success of this coup-de-main, like others of the same kind, depends absolutely on luck, on a dog or a goose."

The faithlessness of Napoleon's character often breaks out in these volumes. He had for truth not only a disregard, but a contempt. He never negotiated but to deceive. Falsehood, he seems to have regarded as an allowable artifice. Relating to the Directory, the means by which he extracted supplies from Venice, and had entangled that state in a quarrel, he says, June 7, 1796:—

"If your plan is to extract five or six millions from Venice, I have purposely provided this sort of rupture for you. You might demand it by way of indemnity for the battle of Borghetto, which I was obliged to fight in order to take that place. If you have more decided intentions, I think you ought to keep up this subject of quarrel, inform me of what you design to do, and await the favorable moment, which I will seize according to circumstances; for we must not have all the world upon our hands at once."

In his dealings with Genoa, he was equally faithless. He writes to the French agent in that city, June 15, 1796:—

"We have established a great many batteries on the Riviera of Genoa: we ought now to sell the cannon and ammunition to the Genoese, that we may not have to guard them, but yet find them there in case we have need of them again.

"BONAPARTE."

But it was in his negotiations with the court of Rome that his duplicity was the most conspicuous. Agreeing to Bonaparte's representations, the Directory authorized him (October 15, 1796) to continue negotiations with Rome until, having settled other affairs, he felt himself strong enough to march against the Papal States:—

"We can now think with more advantage of chastising the obstinacy of the pope, who has refused the conditions of the peace; but the taking of Rome is a great and delicate operation in the state in which we are at present, and ought not to be undertaken till the most favorable moment. You have seen by one of our late despatches that, to cover our ulterior plans, we have enjoined our commissioners with the army of Italy to spin out the

negotiation with the pope; but we request you to inform citizen Cacaault that he is exclusively charged with the measures which he has to take, in order to keep up a feeling of security in Rome, and to prevent any suspicion of our designs, till you can engage in the execution of them."

These sentiments were in perfect conformity with those entertained by Napoleon. Indeed, he did not want to receive them to carry out the deception they recommended. He wrote to Cardinal Mattei, urgently entreating him to use his influence with the pope to prevent hostilities, and stated in the most express and solemn terms his desire for peace:—

"Head-quarters, Ferrara, Oct. 21, 1796.

"The court of Rome has refused to adopt the conditions of peace offered by the Directory; it has broken the armistice, and, while suspending the execution of the conditions, it is arming; it wishes for war, and shall have it; but, before I can in cold blood foresee the ruin and death of those senseless persons who would pretend to oppose the republican phalanxes, I owe it to my nation, to humanity, to myself, to make a last effort to bring back the pope to more moderate sentiments, conformable to his true interests, to his character, and to reason.

"The French government permits me still to listen to negotiations for peace; everything may be arranged. War, so cruel for the people, has terrible results for the vanquished; avert great calamities from the pope. You know how anxious I am to finish by peace a struggle that war would terminate for me without glory as without danger."

To judge of the sincerity of this communication, we have only to turn to the letter he writes (three days later) to "citizen Cacaault," the French minister at Rome:—

"Verona, Oct. 24, 1796.

"The Directory informs me that it has charged you to continue the negotiations with Rome. You will keep me regularly apprized of what you are doing, that I may seize the favorable moment for executing the intentions of the Directory. You are well aware that, after the peace with Naples and Genoa, the good harmony which prevails with the king of Sardinia, the recapture of Corsica, and our decided superiority in the Mediterranean, I shall not delay for a moment to rush upon Rome, and to avenge the national honor; the great point just now is to gain time. My intention is, when I enter the papal territories, and it will not be long first, to do it in consequence of the armistice, in order to take possession of Ancona; thence, after setting my rear in order, I shall be better able to proceed further. In short, the great art at this moment is to keep up the ball between us to deceive the old fox."

At every period of his life Napoleon was equally faithless. It may safely be asserted that he never entered on a negotiation but with some treacherous purpose, and never concluded a treaty he did not intend to break, when a favorable moment for war presented itself.

Hypocrisy seems to have been natural to his character. In the last despatch of this collection, Oct. 10, 1797, he recounts to the Directory the articles of the treaty of peace he had concluded, and speaks of withdrawing into retirement:—

"I think that I have done what every member of the Directory would have done in my place. I

have merited by my services the approbation of the government and of the nation; I have received repeated marks of its esteem. I have now no more to do but to mingle again with the crowd, to grasp once more the plough of Cincinnati, and to set an example of respect for magistrates and aversion for military rule, which has destroyed so many republics and ruined several states."

At that moment he was probably meditating the seizure of the supreme authority. For some months previously he had regarded himself as the first person in the state, and must have had profound contempt for the government he expressed his intention of obeying.

As illustrating the most important and brilliant period of Napoleon's life, we regard these volumes as of the first importance. They exhibit his character in all its brilliancy of light, and depth of shadow. They show the general of unrivalled skill, decision, activity, and courage, and the adventurer of boundless ambition, treachery, and falsehood. With Napoleon no peace could ever have been lasting. The last policy pursued towards him was the bravest and wisest—to declare war against him unto death, and to regard him as an enemy to the peace and security of mankind.

MR. AMOS' TRIAL OF SOMERSET FOR THE MURDER OF OVERBURY.*

THE historical greatness of some of the persons implicated, and the mystery in which it was involved, have given an interest to everything connected with the murder of Sir Thomas Overbury, that more remarkable trials in a merely criminal sense do not inspire. Something, too, must be added for the manner in which the case has been presented to us by eminent writers; something for the previous circumstances attendant upon the connexion of Somerset with lady Essex; and a good deal, perhaps, to the necessary haze in which the story must be popularly presented, from the indecencies that would attend upon its full display. As an example of the probable prevalence of atrocious crime in high places, we do not think that it proves much, from the evident horror with which it was regarded by the public; though it may be readily enough received as a specimen of the court of James the First—the grossest and basest and perhaps the most criminal in our annals.

A full exhibition of the whole case—a complete filling up of the outlines of Hume—would form a very curious and interesting book; especially if recourse were had to our manuscript depositories, now so accessible for literary purposes. From the great mass of materials, either of subordinate interest, or so like in character as to be little more than repetitions, considerable art must be used in their management; so that while the reader should have all the original evidence which bears upon the proof or illustrates the manners of the age, mere formal matters or repetitions should be avoided. As far as regards industry and research upon points connected with his subject-matter, "the trial of the Earl of Somerset for the murder of Sir Thomas Overbury," Mr. Amos leaves little to desire. Whether the subject has not been too much limited to the simple

*The Great Oyer of Poisoning: the trial of the Earl of Somerset for the poisoning of Sir Thomas Overbury, in the tower of London, and various matters connected therewith, from contemporary MSS. By Andrew Amos, Esq., late member of the supreme council of India.—Bentley.

fact of trial and guilt, may be a question; there is no doubt but that the materials are inartistically presented. *The Great Oyer of Poisoning* is neither a story of the whole proceedings, such as we find in some foreign narratives of criminal cases, nor a simple report of the trial, nor a collection of original documents relating to it, but to some extent partakes of the nature of all three, without the unity and character of either. Mr. Amos opens his work with a review of the previous circumstances which led to the murder of Overbury. In this he is brief, and somewhat jejune; for which it may be said, that fulness was very difficult, consistently with modern delicacy, in all that concerned the intrigues and divorce of Lady Essex; but there was no occasion to dwell, as Mr. Amos does at length and in a kind of *annual-writer* style, upon the mere externals of the subjects—as masques and court parties. The trial of Somerset from the State Trials, its comparison with another report in the State Paper Office, and the publication in full of many examinations that were garbled or suppressed at the trial, have the interest attending upon original documents, in an age when more dramatic character was possessed by individuals and more dramatic spirit infused into life. The remarks on the conduct of king James, and an endeavor to penetrate the motives of its mystery—the elaborate exhibitions of the behavior of Coke and Bacon in reference to the getting-up and public management of the case, with some observations on the general nature of the charge against Somerset—have a relation to the main business, but are rather of the nature of antiquarian criticism than popular disquisition. But the true fault of all these chapters, and indeed of the book, is diffuseness and overdoing. Mr. Amos cannot let a position speak for itself, or be content after proving without overwhelming it. If he wishes to impress the caution with which the confessions of condemned criminals should be received, he quotes from *Jonathan Wild* and *The Beggar's Opera*; and he continually wanders as far if not so wide for illustrations of plain positions. Hence, a heavy and lumbering character is imparted to the matter of the book, and the style frequently approaches the twaddling.

Notwithstanding the number of new documents from the State Paper Office, we do not know that the general conclusion formed by contemporaries and continued to the present day is much affected. That Overbury was poisoned, we think is clear enough; that Somerset's wife, the divorced lady Essex, instigated the plot, seems equally clear; as well as that Franklin the apothecary and Mrs. Turner concocted and conveyed the poisons; whilst Weston, the jailer of Overbury, administered them, with the cognizance and sanction of Elwes or Helwysse, the governor of the Tower, appointed by Somerset and his friends—*pro hac vice*, as it is inferred. That the earlier poisons were not administered through fear and struggles of conscience, as declared in the confessions of Weston and Elwes, is likely; because it seems impossible for Overbury to have survived so long had he taken some of the doses. It is even possible that their unskilled and bungling efforts might not destroy him after all, but that, as Mr. Amos infers, he was really done to death by a clyster prescribed by the French physician of James and administered by the French apothecary Lobell; Somerset himself being innocent of the plots both of the monarch and his wife. The only evidence of this view, however, is a series of refined and rather far-fetched inferences. The hatred of

the countess to Overbury—the quarrel between Overbury and Somerset—the imprisonment of the former at the instance of the latter—the removal of one lieutenant of the tower, the appointment of another, and the only known agents in the business being traced to Somerset, or at least to his wife—are strong moral and indeed legal presumptions against him. The motives of James are hazy, and are not known; they have to be conjectured. That Overbury was in possession of some mysterious secret, either relating to the murder of prince Henry—a fact, by the by, never established—or to the king's addiction to an infamous vice, is mere guess. Whatever Overbury knew we may be sure that Somerset knew; so that the king had as much inducement to poison his favorite as his favorite's friend. That there was "something between" the king and Somerset, was known by the anxiety of James to get him to plead guilty, and by his predetermined pardon if he behaved inoffensively. Somerset (and additional proofs under Coke's own hand are given in this volume) displayed the coolness of conscious innocence or conscious safety; whilst the cautious manner in which he conducted his own defence, yet firmly protesting his innocence, led some of his contemporaries to infer his ignorance of the murder. On a trial under the modern system, (as put by Mr. Amos—though, as such a crime is impossible in our times, the supposition must pass for nothing,) Somerset would probably have been acquitted; but rather under a verdict of "not proven" than "not guilty." We should, however, feel more inclined to adopt the hypothesis of Mr. Amos as to the guilt of James than the innocence of Somerset.

The examination of the professional conduct of Coke and Bacon in relation to this murder, and the detection of the murderers, is rather collateral than principal to the subject of the book. It therefore wants the attraction of closeness and coherence. Read as separate disquisitions on Coke and Bacon, they possess considerable interest, from the light they throw on the character of their respective minds. We see Coke untiring in labor, patient over the slightest facts, and wonderfully painstaking in conning the details till he had thoroughly mastered them and was ready to work up the whole into a conclusive case. The legal character of his mind is visible throughout. He is submissive to the king, ready to do his business, and without boggling at scruples; but he must do it in a business-like way. He will not mind straining the law, or terrifying the witnesses; but he must work by means of evidence, no matter what its moral value, or how he gets at it; it seems pretty clear that he pursued evidence which the king might rather have held in; and he appears to have had that high professional feeling which renders some eminent men inclined to give *despotic* advice to their patients or clients. The mind of Bacon on the other hand, was more various and elastic. He studied to anticipate the wishes, he soothed the conscience, (or what might pass for conscience,) and he considered the honor of the king, as well as regarded public appearances. The treatment of Bacon was more of the scholar, the courtier, the politician, and orator. Coke was only the lawyer; but, as law was the matter in hand, we suspect he shows to most advantage in the business. Mr. Amos is quite right in holding that the prosecutions for the Overbury murders cannot properly be passed over in the lives of either Coke or Bacon. The inquiry will not reflect much credit upon Coke, and, we

grieve to say, will only further confirm the truth of Pope's characteristic of Bacon, "*meanest of mankind.*"

A useful feature in the book, though somewhat interfering with its march, are the remarks on former legal practices, which Mr. Amos introduces from time to time as the text gives occasion to it. Of these we quote a few.

CHARACTER OF THE OLDER STATE TRIALS.

"It is to be regretted that in Hargrave's and in Howell's State Trials the reader is seldom furnished with any references to the authorities from which the reports of the different trials are taken. The reports of the more ancient trials in these collections were most probably copied from publications prepared under the inspection of the chief officers of state and of the law, and sometimes revised by the sovereign himself. We should not attach much credit to a report published by the Austrian government of a trial of William Tell, or by the French republic of the trials of Louis XVI., and of queen Marie Antoinette; but, in our domestic history, we are too apt to surrender our belief to the only extant details of our ancient State Trials, without duly considering by whom and with what motives they were published.

"The course of proceeding in ancient times for crushing an individual who had excited fears or kindled hatred in the breast of a sovereign, was somewhat after the following manner. Written examinations were taken in secret, and often wrung from prisoners by the agonies of the rack. Such parts of these documents, and such parts only as were criminative, were read before a judge removable at the will of the crown, and a jury packed for the occasion, who gave their verdict under the terror of fine and imprisonment. Speedily the government published whatever account of the trials suited their purposes. Subservient divines were next appointed to 'press the consciences,' as it was called, of the condemned, in their cells and on the scaffold; and the transaction terminated with another government brochure, full of dying contrition and eulogy by the criminal on all who had been instrumental in bringing him to the gallows. In the mean while, the star chamber, with its pillories, its S. L.s branded on the cheeks with a hot iron, its mutilations of ears, and ruinous fines prohibited the unauthorized publication of trials, and all free discussions upon them, as amounting to an arraignment of the king's justice.

"The right of publishing State Trials, till a comparatively late period, appears to have been restricted to persons appointed for the purpose. Thus, in regard to the trial of Plunket, the titular Primate of Ireland, for high treason, in the thirty-third year of Charles II., we have the following imprimatur—'I do appoint Francis Tyton and Thomas Basset to print the trials of Edward Fitzharris and Oliver Plunket; and that no others presume to print the same. F. Pemberton.'

"In the time of Queen Anne, long after the abolition of the Star Chamber and the emancipation of the press, we have an instance of jealousy entertained in regard to the unrestricted publication of trials. It is the more remarkable as it occurred before Lord Holt, a strenuous champion for liberty. The transaction is thus related in Howell's State Trials, vol. xiv. p. 935.

"'Counsel—My Lord, we insist upon it, that these fellows should not go on writing.

"'Ordered, that the writers be turned out of the court.

"'And accordingly they were turned out, at the repeated instances, &c. However, thus far the short-hand writers had proceeded with great exactness; and they are ready, by their handwriting and notes, to justify all before mentioned in this trial, which by this time was very nearly ended.'

"In a paper which one Haagen, executed for the abduction of an heiress in the first year of the reign of queen Anne, delivered to the sheriff on the scaffold, he complains—'I expected my trial should be published, that the world might see my treatment, what I have done and what I have left undone in my case; but I am informed it may not be printed.'

INSTRUMENTS OF TORTURE.

"The Rack was a large wooden frame, of oak, raised three feet from the ground; the prisoner was laid under it on his back upon the floor; his wrists and ankles were attached by cords to two collars at the ends of the frame; these ends were moved by levers in opposite directions, till the body rose to the level of the frame; questions were then put; and if the answers did not prove satisfactory, the sufferer was stretched more and more, by the further elongation of the ends of the frame from each other, through means of the levers, until the bones started from their sockets.

"The Scavenger's Daughter, another instrument of torture used in the tower, was a broad hoop of iron, consisting of two parts fastened to each other by a hinge; it operated by pressure over the small of the back, and by force of the compression soon caused the blood to flow from the nostrils.

"The Iron Gauntlet, another kind of torture, served to compress the wrists and suspend the prisoner in the air from two distant points of a beam. 'I felt,' said F. Gerard, one of the sufferers by this kind of torture, 'the chief pain in my breasts, belly, arms, and hands. I thought that all the blood in my body had run into my arms, and began to burst out at my finger-ends. This was a mistake; but my arms swelled till the gauntlets were buried within the flesh. After being thus suspended an hour, I fainted; and when I came to myself I found the executioners supporting me in their arms; they replaced the pieces of wood under my feet; but as soon as I recovered, removed them again. Thus I continued hanging for the space of five hours, during which I fainted eight or nine times.'

"A fourth kind of torture used in the tower was called Little Ease. It was of so small dimensions, and so constructed, that the prisoner could neither stand, walk, sit, nor lie in it at full length. He was compelled to draw himself up in a squatting posture, and so remain during several days."

THE LATER PLATONISTS.—"The later Platonists of Alexandria have perhaps hardly had justice done them by the moderns, either in regard to the improvement which they wrought in paganism, or the share which they have had in forming the present opinions of the world. Taking the doctrine of Plato as the foundation, borrowing something from the Jews and something from the other sects of pagans, they formed a philosophical religion, which we may think of little worth when offered as the rival of Christianity, but which we ought to admire as surpassing any other sect of paganism."—*Sharpe's Egypt.*

CHAPTER IX.

High and inscrutable the old man stood,
Calm in his voice, and calm within his eye:
Not always signs in man of calmest mood.

BYRON.

THAT evening, John Downing, who for years had not approached the hall—never, in fact, since the sense of his unworthiness of the bounties of the old baronet weighed upon his mind—took his staff into his hand, and walked steadily across Hartington green, and up the old avenue. He had waited till evening, not so much to conceal from vulgar observation the emotions that blanched his shrivelled face, as for the greater certainty of finding Sir Mark Colston alone.

He was answered by the single servant, super-added to the old establishment, that, at such an hour, he could not be admitted; that Sir Mark was writing in his study, and not to be disturbed. But for this, the old man was prepared.

"Tell him, sir, it is the parish clerk of Hartington who wants to see him on pressing business," said he, "and I warrant your master will not refuse."

To the evident surprise of the outler, the old man's prediction was verified.

"Show him in immediately," was the reply. And a moment afterwards, old Downing, having left his hat and staff in the servants' hall, was ushered into a room, where, beside a bureau, lighted by a shaded library lamp, sat the man he came to upbraid.

"I expected this visit, Mr. Downing," said he, the moment the servant, after receiving orders that Sir Mark was not to be disturbed till he rang, had quitted the room. "I expected this visit, and am prepared for it. You are not a man of sufficient strength of mind to discern that it is as essential to your welfare as to mine that we should not be suspected of having met before."

"It is not the care of either your welfare or mine, that has brought me to this house," replied Downing; the firmness with which he had entered the gates of the old place already somewhat shaken by the stern self-possession of him he had expected to find anxious and wavering. "I am come for the sake of the innocent, who have been despoiled of their inheritance. I am come to see justice done to those who have been wronged."

"If you manage to effect *that*, my good friend," replied the new baronet, with a contemptuous smile, "you will be a greater man than the lord chancellor himself. You have been reciting for the last fifty years the verse that promises the seed of the righteous man they shall not be forsaken, and of the virtuous, that they shall not be seen begging their bread, till you fancy that, in redressing grievances, you are sure of the strong arm on your side. Had you lived in the stress of the world, Master Downing, instead of in your lonely cottage by the Hams of Hartington, you would know better. But sit down, sit down. We have much to talk about. I have not the slightest wish to hurry the homilies and menaces with which I see you are about to favor me."

"I am about to favor you with nothing of the kind, sir; for I know they'd be thrown away!" replied the old man, sinking into the chair pushed towards him, not in accordance with the invitation of his host, but because he was scarcely able to support himself. "The man who'd act as you have done, must be not only a villain, but a desperate one. Bad as your actions have been, you'd

have doubtless done worse, had your occasions required it. And if I come here boldly, (though knowing how glad you'd be to put me out of the way altogether,) it is because, as your servants have seen me come safe into your presence, it is necessary to your character they should see me safe out of it again."

"Ay, ay! Have you found tongue at last, old gentleman?" retorted Sir Mark, a little amazed at this self-assumption on the part of one he had previously found so meek. "You are right, however. I cannot afford to shoot you. It strikes me, however, that an allusion to cutting throats, is ungracious and out of place on the part of the father of Luke Downing. Though, by this time, you have perhaps taken care to remove from Warlingwood, the evidence of the murder committed by him, I promise you that his neck is not the less in jeopardy."

Sir Mark was satisfied. The hint was not made at random; and the immediate change of the old man's countenance convinced him that the evidence in question had not been removed; either because the poor father had wanted courage for the search—or because his search had proved unsuccessful. The latter was, in fact, the case. Fruitless had been the clerk's utmost endeavors. When, at the close of many months after the fatal event in his family, he found heart for the attempt, all trace of the objects in question had disappeared.

"It is not of me and mine, sir, that I am here to speak," rejoined old Downing, as soon as he could command his voice. "Better we should all be brought to shame, than that I should have to answer before God for sitting by and seeing the old house and lands of the Colstons wrested from their rightful owner, to fall into the hands of—"

"One whom even you will allow to have as much of the Colston blood running in his veins as either of the whitefaced heiresses who pretended to supplant me. By your leave, friend Downing, you are not an ass. You are deserting the cause of your order. If you saw things clearly and wisely, you would feel that, sprung from your own class, the grandson of a man who was the friend and companion of your grandfather, it is your business to support me in my pretensions to the Colston estate, rather than people who are no otherwise entitled to it than inasmuch as their great uncle Mark may have played the rogue to the pretty daughter of one of the honestest men in Hartington."

The poor clerk, who had never before taken this view of the case, was for a moment a little staggered by the sophistry of his host. But by degrees the plain sense of a virtuous mind resumed the ascendancy.

"It is not the rights or wrongs that may have been, sir, for which I am accountable," said he.

"All I have to answer for to God, to man, and to my conscience, is the having suffered you to obtain possession of documents, by the loss of which the claims of poor Miss Sophia and her sister have been set aside; and enable you to have a false key forged for Hartington church, by means of which—"

"What evidence have you, my good friend, of the facts you are pleased to assert?"

"The evidence of my own ears and eyes. Do you suppose I have forgotten the hammering in the church, the morning after the Colston vault was opened? Do you fancy I am to be taken in by the coffin-plate affixed to one of the old

coffins, by the fellow who put himself off upon me as one of the undertaker's men! No, no! air; I see plain enough through all these things now."

"I did not inquire through what you saw, or fancied that you saw, Mr. Downing; but simply what proof you could adduce in a court of justice of any unfair dealing on my part with either register, key, or coffin-plate. Such old wives' tales as those you seem disposed to narrate, are not so difficult of invention as to be believed on your simple asseveration. Where, pray, is your witness?"

"There!" interrupted the old clerk; pointing upwards with his trembling hand.

"Excellent!" replied Sir Mark, with a bitter sneer. "Truly a most dramatic touch! I have seen it better done though, before now, at the Surrey theatre. But do you suppose, my good friend, that mummery of this description would be admitted in proof by so matter-of-fact a person as a lord chief-justice of the realm? No, no. The wisacres of the bench require a pair of human eyes to witness the doings of a pair of human hands, and a human tongue to declare it. I saw the murder of your son Jack, perpetrated by the hands of his brother Luke, on the outskirts of Warling-wood, and am ready to depose to it on my oath. That is evidence! But did you see me destroy any portion of the Hartington register? Did you see me take an impression of the church key? Did you see any person in my employ affix a false plate to one of the Colston coffins?"

Poor Downing looked puzzled and panic-struck.

"Then how can you pretend to give evidence of the fact in a court of justice! Do you suppose the law-officers of the crown have nothing better to do with their time than listen to the drivelling surmises of a doting old fellow, whose brains have been cracked by family misfortune?"

"I know nothing about courts of justice or law officers, sir," retorted old Downing, with more self-possession. "But I do know and am known to Colonel Garrett, the nearest magistrate in these parts. He is aware, sir, that with whatever family troubles it has pleased God to try me, my mind 's as reasonable as his or your'n. Not a soul in this parish can tax me with being negligent or incapable of the duties of my calling; and my word has, consequently, as much weight with an upright justice of the peace as that of Sir Mark Colston."

Somewhat startled by the rationality of this argument, the man of the Inner Temple came closer to the point.

"In one word, then," said he, "it is your intention to denounce me! Good! Nothing like being forewarned and forearmed."

"I do not want to denounce you. I want you to let justice have its way, without being forced to it. I want you to give up the Hartington estate quietly and honestly, to them it belongs to."

"And so accuse myself as a swindler and impostor! Fool! on what pretence could I possibly abjure the rights which I have asserted, and which have been conceded to me! What plea could I adduce for resigning my pretensions! No! The die is thrown, and we must play out the game."

"Not if it is to be won by unfair means!" persisted Downing. "It is never too late to be honest. I, sir, am on the border of the grave; nearer to it by five years, than when so sorely

tempted by you that I yielded to the temptation. And for that yielding, I am now prepared to suffer; for I can't die in peace till atonement is made."

"Selfish, drivelling fool!" muttered Sir Mark, eyeing him askance, with a contemptuous smile. "Feeble in vice as you were unstable in virtue! Will you never learn to be a man? Who do you suppose cares how you die, or when, or where?"

"The Almighty cares, without whose decree not a hair of my head can fall," persisted Downing, gathering courage from this coarse abuse.

"Then let the Almighty take care of his own!" cried his auditor, out of all patience; "for I warn you, master clerk, that in case you persist in intermeddling with affairs that nothing concern you, you will have need of stronger protection than that of your own babbling tongue and palsied members."

The old man folded his arms meekly over his breast; but his looks blanched not. He had evidently made up his mind to abide the worst. And the worst was soon unfolded.

Taking from the upper part of the bureau a small despatch-box, closed by a patent lock, his companion proceeded to open it by a key, suspended to his guard-chain. There was something unaccountable, however, in the care with which the box was secured. For the first object withdrawn from it by Sir Mark was simply a printed newspaper.

"You hear occasionally, I presume, from New York!" said he, affecting negligently to examine its columns. "It can be no news, therefore, to you, though it might to old Wigswell and Colonel Garrett, that Luke Downing of Hartington now figures under the name of Laurence Donovan as a partner in one of the most thriving manufactories in the States."

A slight moan escaped the lips of the miserable father.

"You will readily believe that I am too deeply interested in his career, to have lost sight of him for a moment," resumed Sir Mark. "No one more appreciates than I do the skill and intelligence with which, in so short a space of time, he managed to acquire the confidence of the employers to whose hands he intrusted the little capital with which you were wise enough to establish him in his adopted country, where money, combined with shrewdness and prudence, has twice the value it bears in our overgorged land. No one understands as I do the motives of those arduous endeavors. Laurence Donovan, it appears, is now a naturalized citizen of New York. Nay, the paper before me contains a much applauded speech made by him a few months ago, at a public meeting of the chief merchants, to promote the abolition of —"

"I don't want to read it," cried the old man, in a querulous voice, pushing back with his hand the offered paper.

"I will read it to you, then —"

"I don't want to hear it read, sir! It is not the affairs of—of Mr. Laurence Donovan I came here to discuss."

"That point you must permit me to decide. I have had some correspondence, within the last year, with the said Mr. Laurence Donovan, which, by your leave, I will now communicate to yourself."

And while the old man sat aghast with consternation at this astounding intelligence, he proceeded to

unfold a letter addressed to Mark Colston, Esq., Inner Temple, in the well-known hand-writing of the unhappy Luke, bearing the New York postmark, at which poor Downing cast a shuddering glance of recognition.

Deeply as his interest was excited by the letter, he would fain have said again, "Don't read it! I can't bear to hear you read it!" so appalled was his spirit at the notion of hearing confirmed the terrible fact of his son's amenability to the power of a ruffian, but that he was certain his prayers would only serve to confirm the intentions of Sir Mark.

"By what unhappy mischance my secret fell into your keeping," wrote the pseudo Laurence Donovan, "it were useless now to inquire. Suffice it that you know what I fondly believed to be safe in the custody of my poor father, and of that still more merciful Father who is in Heaven, who knows my innocence in what you justly term a black and heinous affair.

"But to what end, sir, have you disturbed me in my career of industry and integrity, and the happy security I was enjoying? It cannot be for a good purpose. For, since you know the life of usefulness I am leading, exercising my strenuous endeavors for the promotion of the public weal, while striving also to establish the respectability of my new and undeservedly prosperous condition, you would, if a virtuous man, say, 'Peace be with him! If he have sinned, he is making atonement. If only unfortunate, Providence extends its hand over him, and his cause prospers.'

"But the tone of menace in which you have addressed me, attests that such are not your views; and I will, consequently, not waste my time in appealing to your compassion, or describing the moments of anguish, past and present, by which I work out the expiation of an involuntary crime. My crown of thorns is never laid aside. My penitence is before God. And in His mercy is my trust.

"To you, therefore, I address neither prayer nor entreaty. We have never met. Heaven send that we may never meet! But I seem to understand your nature and drift as though we were well acquainted.

"Speak out, then. Tell me in plain terms your object. Fix your price. As you justly observe, though my life may be secure against your denunciation, that which is dearer to me than my life, my character, would be destroyed at once by a mere whisper of the fact that my name is an assumed one, and that I fled my country to evade a charge of manslaughter—*of fratricide!* Name the sum or sacrifice by which your secrecy is to be obtained, and, if by any human possibility within my compass, it shall be yours. If not, you must do your worst. Should I be compelled, by the hardness of your terms, to break off the negotiation, the letter which conveys the tidings of my incompetency will also convey the news of my death. On such points I have dwelt too considerably, under the pressure of heavy and incessant affliction, not to have made up my mind on every possible point and contingency into which my unfortunate position could betray me.

"I said just now, sir, that I scorned to address to you either request or petition: I was premature in the protest. On one point, sir, I would *fain* be beholden to you. On one point I entreat your mercy. In denouncing me to those among whom I am now associating, and to whose level of mind

I have raised myself by severe study and a self-effected education, do not, I implore you, aim a still harder blow than I have been already the unhappy cause of inflicting, on two whom I love as much better than fame, or name, or mere worldly connexions, as the ties of nature are stronger than those created by interest or ambition. Let my poor father, let my dear cousin, Esther, live in happy ignorance of whatever evil you intend me. Above all, spare the grey head of that dear and good old man, and I shall find courage for my fate."

"And this is the son," cried Sir Mark, as soon as he perceived big tears pouring like rain from the eyes of the unhappy Downing, "this is the son whom you abandon to his ruin, in order to serve the cause of a couple of peevish damsels, who scarce consider you good enough to tread the same earth as themselves; with whom, so long as you live, you will never exchange a syllable; and who, even if aware of the sacrifice you had made in their favor, would think you did no more than your duty as a born serf of their estate, in leaving your only son to be hanged by the neck, in order that they might enjoy the apportioning of a certain number of thousands a year!"

"It is not for *their* sakes I am acting; it is for my own!" replied John Downing, in a dogged voice.

"After all, then, your fine sentiments end in a sneaking affection for number one!" cried his adversary, with a hoarse laugh. "You are afraid of what your neighbors would say were the truth discovered! You are afraid of losing appetite for your food, and sleeping in the dark o' nights. You are afraid of Parson Wigswell—you are afraid of Jukes the wheelwright—you are afraid of mine hostess of the Black Lion."

"I am afraid of what 't were better for you that you feared as I do—I am afraid of hell-fire!—I am afraid that, in the better land promised even to sinners, if contrite and humble," rejoined the clerk, "it may be denied me to behold again the beloved wife of my youth, unless I strive to unburden my conscience."

"Your conscience—your conscience!" retorted Sir Mark, out of all patience. "People never find out the *existence* of their conscience, till they've overloaded it, just as a rich man finds out he has got a digestion. Take what dinner-pills you choose for your relief, but not at my expense. In one word, therefore, Master Downing, either you keep your surmises and our previous acquaintance to yourself; or this letter, long prepared for the purpose," continued he, taking a large envelope addressed to the secretary of state's office, from the case containing the collected documents—"this letter shall instantly convey to the proper authorities a disclosure of every fact connected with the murder of John Downing the younger. After the communication from a certain Mr. Laurence Donovan with which you have been favored with the perusal, I need not tell you that such a denunciation were tantamount to a sentence of death upon your son. Not by the hand of the finisher of the law. The rope of the hangman reaches only the body of the felon. But better still, by his own!—his own—whose ministry will condemn his immortal soul to the pangs of the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched."

"Man—man!—have mercy on me, do not tempt me thus cruelly," interrupted the agonized old clerk, to whom these words were sacred. But his adversary was not to be entreated.

"Let him have repented and atoned as he may for his former sins," persisted Sir Mark, "his last act in this world will be the crime of suicide. For that, expiation is impossible, unless by those torments of eternity which constitute the vengeance of a jealous God!"

"No, no, no!" cried Downing. "The Lord our God is a God of mercy:—the Lord our God, who hath witnessed our sore temptation."

"And without temptation, who falls into sin?" interrupted the evil-minded sophist. "My good friend, know that he who has tripped once, may without scruple fall again, for his cause is judged. If, from a wishy-washy apprehension lest the nearest kinsman of the late Sir Clement Colston should enjoy his estate unsanctioned by a marriage ceremony more or less, you should condemn your only son to the eternal penalties of self-murder, far greater would be your crime than in having for a moment neglected the custody of a bunch of rusty keys."

"You must give me time, sir, you must give me time to consider all these things," faltered poor old Downing, the powers of whose enfeebled mind were becoming exhausted. "You must give me time!"

"On condition you pledge the flimsy thing you call your conscience, that, in the interim, not a hint escapes your lips relative to the position you suppose me to hold in this place."

"I give you my solemn word!" cried Downing. "I can do no more. You know whether I can keep it."

"Enough! Go home! Ponder upon all you have heard. Ponder upon the great fact that God, who commanded children to love and honor their parents, issued no commandment to parents to love their children, so impossible seemed it to him who so loved his Son, that parental tenderness could be wanting. It is the first great instinct of nature, Master Downing,—the holiest and best. Think twice, therefore, before you outrage the tie."

Satisfied that these high-sounding words would sink deep into the bewildered spirit he had been endeavoring to mislead, the new master of the Hall, when he saw the study door close upon his victim, replaced the precious documents which had served as implements to his malice, in their former safe-keeping, with a chuckle of exultation and glare of triumphant scorn, such as used to irradiate the features of Edmund Kean after his subjugation of the "gentle Lady Anne."

He foresaw that his purpose was accomplished.

CHAPTER X.

"S'il ne fallait que s'abandonner en toute liberté aux instincts de son cœur, pour revenir ensuite à son devoir et retrouver intacts tous les biens qu'on a perdus, cela serait trop simple et trop facile."—JULES JANIN.

The break of day that succeeded this stormy interview, was one of those soft, misty, autumnal mornings, when nature, like other decaying beauties, appears to cover her face with a veil to conceal its infirmity of feature.

Creeping mists obscured the lowlands; and the acclivities of Warling-wood, deeply tinged with their autumnal hue, could only be perceived at intervals as the wreaths of vapor passed onward along the valley. So still was the quiet landscape, that you seemed to hear the dropping of every yellow leaf that fell death-stricken to the ground. Only the Hams and their alder-bushes retained the

dank, dark unnatural verdure, produced by the overflowings of the little stream.

Before the leaden sky was more than half enlightened, the poor old clerk had already issued from his cottage; his heavy spirit in sad accordance with the depressing closeness of the weather. With his spade upon his shoulder, as if for the garden work which for some time past he had resumed sufficiently to supply himself with the necessities of the life, though never for the pride and pleasure of former years, he reached the wicket gate opening to the lane.

Pausing there a moment, he looked to the right and left, as if to ascertain that no eye was upon him, ere he closed it after him and proceeded with steps more hurried than his usual drooping pace, towards the bottom of the lane; where the muddy ooze gradually terminated in a sprinkling of verdure deepening into the green margin of the stream. Poor old man!—His foot was on the Hams again; on the Hams from which, for more than five years past, he had refrained as from a place of torment.

Flapping his faded straw hat still lower over his eyes, and looking neither hither nor thither, he took his way along the path towards F——; at that season of the year so spongy with the rise of the waters, that every print of his heavy foot seemed to sink into the soil. He perceived it not, however. His downcast looks were bent upon the grassy way before him; and even that he saw not, for the mist before his eyes. He did not so much as hear the rippling of the stream, where, at a turn of its channel, the gravel thrown up by the trout formed a sort of dam, against which the waters chafed and murmured. His senses were wholly absorbed in the inward workings of his soul.

On reaching an alder bush, somewhat larger than the rest, at the foot of which lay a white stone, placed there perhaps as a mark, the old man paused suddenly, raised his hat from his forehead, wiped the cold moisture from his brow; and having stared wistfully round, to assure himself that, though the morning had now fully dawned, he was still in solitary possession of the valley, he turned suddenly to the left; and, putting aside the underwood fringing like a natural boundary the abrupt rise of Warling-wood, pushed upwards along a run, or pathway, so overgrown and entangled that, even though the leaves had partially fallen from the trees, the person ascending to the ridge of the hill by that narrow way, was undiscoverable from the level below.

Some fifty or sixty feet above the Hams, along the slanting ascent, ran a ledge a few feet wide, produced either by a landslip, or, according to the often mumbled assertion of poor Sir Clement, by the remains of an old Roman military road; an antiquarian crotchet that signified little, since the lapse of centuries had covered it with underwood like the rest, so as to render the track undiscernible, unless when groping on the spot.

Thither it was, however, that the old clerk was wending his way. Had he been questioned concerning his business there, his answer would have been, that he came to dig up, for transplantation to his garden, a few roots of the wild lilies that grew abundantly near the spot. But constant reference to the fragment of a letter which he took from his pocket, on which seemed traced a plan or map, indicated some ulterior object.

As he wound his way upwards with the spade

resting on his shoulder, the oppressive mistiness of the atmosphere, warm with the exhalations of the teeming earth and the decaying vegetation on its surface, compelled him to rest himself for a moment. Or perhaps he paused only to ascertain that the rustlings he heard around him, though not a breath was stirring, were produced only by the flitting of the birds among the sharp, glossy leaves of the underwood of Spanish chestnut; as they flew, piping to each other, from bush to bush, in the sweet melancholy whistle that sounds like a sad farewell to the declining year.

After a moment's breathing-time, the poor old man resumed his way. But just as he attained the spot he was desirous to reach, again he stopped suddenly; and *this* time, with heaving breast and distended eyes. Horror overcame his mind on discerning through the mist, and at the very juncture recently pointed out by a letter from New York, the figure of a person engaged in the very office he was come to perform.

The bushy copsewood interposed like a screen between them. The hazy atmosphere perplexed his at all times imperfect vision. But as well as he could satisfy himself, a white figure was stooping over a cavity that might have served for an infant's grave, on the very spot where he knew the clothes of his unhappy son to have been deposited.

Nothing doubting that the visitation was supernatural—an apparition indicatory—(which!)—of divine wrath or divine protection, the hair stood up on the old man's head, and he was about to fall on his knees in reverence; when, lo! startled by his movements, the figure hitherto stooping, stood upright; and he beheld one whom he instantly recognized as Esther Harman, his niece.

Still, his mind was so perturbed, his recollections of the girl whom he had beheld but twice or thrice since she grew to woman's estate, were so faint—and above all, the wasted shadowy creature before him bore such slight affinity to the well-conditioned maiden so loved of Luke, and, unhappily, so loved also of his brother—that poor Downing might be forgiven if, for a moment, he fondly imagined that he beheld the disembodied spirit of his sister's daughter; who, being in service in another country, had perhaps died, and returned after death to haunt the spot so fatal to her earthly happiness.

But poor Esther possessed a far clearer mind than her uncle. No sooner did she catch a glimpse of him striving against the branches of the copse, than she understood at once his purpose there, and his terror lest that purpose should be discovered.

"Uncle!" said she, advancing hastily towards him, "we have not a minute to lose. People will be about, uncle, and neither of us must be seen here. The shreds that remain of what you came to destroy, are already under ground. I was filling in the earth over them. Help me, uncle, help me. When quite covered in, I will replace the moss and sticks over the place exactly as I found them."

But to excite the same apt promptitude in the old man, with which the danger of him she loved had inspired her own gentle nature, was not so easy. Poor Downing kept gazing on her, bewildered, and holding her hand in his—as if trying to remember—or perhaps trying to forget.

"Lose no time, dear uncle," persisted the poor girl, snatching away her hand, and taking from the trembling hold of the old man the spade he was now scarcely capable of using.

"What do you want with me, Hetty! What

is it you are going to do? I came here to dig up roots for my garden," said he, at length, in such manifest confusion of mind, that, without further hesitation, she addressed herself anew to her task, and using the sharp, narrow garden-spade of her uncle in place of her clumsy hoe with which, as the only instrument at her disposal, she had scraped rather than dug her way into the fibrous earth, fortunately softened by the October rains, the cavity was now speedily filled in again. The moisture fell from her brow as she worked. But when the earth was carefully levelled, she spread over it the moss and decayed leaves and broken twigs, with the art or instinct of a bird constructing a nest for its young.

"You would not notice the spot *now*, would you, uncle!" said she, pausing a moment, with tearful eyes and cheeks crimsoned by exertion, to survey her work. Then finding his face overspread by a vacant and idiotic smile, she took him by the arm to lead him away from the place.

"Stay a moment!" said she, stopping suddenly as they were hurrying down to the Hams, through the crashing branches. And though her arms ached with a pain beyond weariness, from her previous labors, she put her foot once more to the spade, and dug up several knots of lily roots, by way of pretext for their presence there in case of any unlucky encounter.

Not a word, however, escaped her lips. She resolved to defer to some future moment, when he was more himself, her explanations to her uncle.

With the spade and hoe hung over his shoulder, and his niece by his side, bearing a few clumps of lily roots, secured with moss and osier withys, he was now tottering mechanically along the water-side back to the cottage; absorbed in vague bewilderment of mind, in which predominated terrible reminiscences of the past, such as seemed to tinge with blood the green herbage under his feet, as when, after long gazing at the sun, crimson spots appear to arise on every object that meets our eyes.

In utter silence they traversed the Hams. Worlds of thought and emotion struggled in the minds of both, so that talk was impossible; and without obstruction, they attained the spot where the ooings of the lane, discharging themselves into the stream, for a moment defiled its fair margin.

Gladly did they turn into the causeway where their presence would excite no surprise; and there it was that Esther Harman found courage to speak.

"I was coming to visit you this morning, uncle," said she, in a broken voice, "even if we had not met in Warling-wood. I wanted to see you. I wanted to tell you that I had heard from *him*. A ship letter. He is well. It was a hint from *him* that urged me to the duty you found me executing."

"Bide a bit, lass," muttered the old man, opening the wicket, leading into his garden, "bide a bit, till you are safe under my own roof, Esther, before you talk of such things."

Before they reached the cottage, John Downing flung aside into the bushes, as if weary of their weight, the tools he had been carrying. But it was only at the door-sill that Esther deposited the lily roots she had mechanically brought back with her all the way to Hartington.

Her uncle was the first to enter the house, which, according to the custom of that primitive village, was left on the latch; and the exclamation of horror-struck surprise with which he

started back on the threshold, prepared her for some unusual circumstance.

On following him into the kitchen, the first object that met her eyes was a hard-featured, middle-aged stranger, attired in the deepest mourning, who seemed so thoroughly at home, that poor Esther's amazement was almost as great as that of her uncle. Of Sir Mark Colston, she had never even heard. But the external appearance of this early visitor seemed to indicate that he was a clergyman. Since she last visited Hartington, Mr. Wigswell had probably been gathered to his predecessor, and was replaced by the harsh-looking individual before her. He did not keep her long in suspense.

"We are both of us early risers, it appears, Master Downing," said he, "like most people who have aught stirring in their heads or hearts to lighten their slumber. To-day, it seems, you have been beforehand with me."

"I went out betimes to meet my niece," said the clerk, who, by the very shock of finding his enemy thus established under his roof, had recovered his self-possession. And Esther, judging from this evasive reply on the part of a man so upright as her uncle, that the stranger was one to whom he was forced to defer, and whose knowledge of his real errand would be injurious, took her cue from his reserve, and prepared to answer whatever question might be addressed her by the individual who was staring her out of countenance with little ceremony or decency.

But Sir Mark Colston was no asker of questions. He was of the order of spirits who are accustomed to give the law, rather than receive it.

"I came hither, Master Downing," said he, after a momentary pause, during which Esther would have retired and left them together, but for a sign from her uncle—"I came hither to inform you of what escaped my memory last night, that the New York packet sails on Saturday next; and that, before that time, your mind must be fully made up."

"Before that time, sir, I will wait upon you," was the reply of the old man, whose feelings were still deeply moved by his recent expedition. "In the meanwhile, I do not well see what we have to say to each other."

"Less, certainly, than of each other!" retorted his visitor; adding, more forbearingly, after obtaining a more perfect view of the sweet face of Esther Harman by the removal of her bonnet, "but on whatever other points we may disagree, Master Downing, there is surely no reason why, as landlord and tenant, we should live on ungracious terms."

"You are mistaken, sir. I am an independent man. This cottage is copyhold. This cottage and the four nearest it are built on what was once church land, and pay a pepper-corn rent to the rector. No, no, I have nothing to do with the Colston family—nothing to do with the Hartington property."

"Then I am a less lucky man than I thought myself," retorted Sir Mark, with another admiring glance towards Esther. "I was in hopes that the visitor you had risen so early this morning to welcome, was at least going to reside under a roof that called me master."

Even this sally obtained not a civil word in reply from old Downing, who, weary as he was, kept sturdily aloof, rather than afford a pretext to his tormentor for resuming the seat from which, at

their entrance, he had risen with the spontaneous deference paid by even the coarsest natures to the presence of youth and beauty.

"I should have spared myself the walk from the Hall, had I been aware that I was not likely to find you alone," continued the baronet, perceiving that there existed no tendency to accommodation on the part of one whom it was so essential to conciliate. He even judged it better to expedite his departure, lest the old clerk should be incited to an open rupture in presence of his niece; and mortifying enough it was to the man at the head of the Hartington estates, that not a single point of advantage presented itself by which he could impress the people before him with a sense of his superiority.

"Aha!" cried he, however, in an exulting voice, the moment he reached the threshold, and saw the lily roots lying beside the door. "You have been to Warling-wood this morning! A strange spot, Master Downing," continued he, fixing his eyes significantly on the instantaneously blanched face of the old clerk, "a strange spot, surely, for you to select for your horticultural experiments! Were these roots taken, pray, from the spot where—"

"They were dug up by me, sir, to place in my uncle's garden," interposed Esther, coming promptly to the assistance of her uncle. "I am fond of flowers, sir—very fond—as fond as he is."

"In that case," rejoined Sir Mark, touching his hat slightly, in token of leave-taking, "you must come and visit the garden at the Hall. The flowers and plants there are quite as much at your disposal, and I trust a little freer from melancholy association than the weeds you have been at the trouble of transplanting from a spot, to say the least of it, so unlucky as Warling-wood."

"Shut the door, Hetty!" cried the old man, tottering back into the cottage and sinking upon the settle, the moment his guest disappeared through the garden-gate into the lane. "Shut it after him, lest he should be tempted to return. Shut it, child, and bolt it!" continued he, with almost hysterical violence. And Esther could appreciate the restraint her uncle must have been exercising over himself in the stranger's presence, from the violence with which his emotions now burst forth.

Heavy sobs, broken by incoherent ejaculations, escaped his heaving breast.

"The wretch—the ruffian!" cried he. "He to speak disrespectfully of my poor boy!—He to triumph over Luke!—He to threaten!—He to exult! And to be obliged to listen to him, Esther, and stand by without an angry word between my lips, while he was darting his looks into yours, and taking the measure of your shape with his hateful eyes. What would your cousin have said, Hetty, could he have seen him!—and I said nothing! I uttered never a word! Like a poor, convicted wretch I sat by, prepared to meet with submission whatever insult he might be pleased to offer to me and mine!"

"Do not distress yourself in this way, uncle," pleaded the poor girl. "The gentleman, whoever he may be, spoke you fairly, and seemed to mean you no harm."

"Means me no harm!" muttered poor Downing, with a haggard look.

"People who have undergone much trouble, get to look upon everybody as an enemy," persisted Esther.

"If you were acting this morning, my dear child, under orders from your poor cousin Luke," rejoined the old man, "you cannot but be aware that his anxiety of late has arisen from the threatenings of a man who is bent upon bringing him to justice."

"Bringing him to justice?" interrupted Esther Harman, turning as pale as death. "No, uncle! I knew nothing of the kind; I guessed nothing of the kind. Since the poor fellow landed in America, he has written to me from time to time, telling me only that he was well and thriving; but never why he had quitted England, or whether he ever intended to return to it again. At first, indeed, I offered to join him, as soon as the labor of my own hands afforded me means for the voyage. For then I fancied him poor, and that my assistance and presence might be a comfort to him. But as soon as I found how much you had done for my cousin, and how greatly he was prospering, I ceased to make further plans or further offers, fancying that, after all, his trip to America had been a mere speculation—an affair of money-making, the unlooked-for success of which had perhaps made him look above me—perhaps forget me—perhaps *forget himself*."

"Poor fellow! poor Luke!" murmured his father, in scarcely audible accents.

"And so I took what comfort I could, uncle, and determined to trouble him no more," added poor Esther, in a still more desponding voice; "though, in spite of all I could do, he was still uppermost in my thoughts—that is, he was *all* my thoughts—all my object—all my very life—he has been, God knows, ever since we were children together, threading daisies on the Norcroft meadows. I worked the less hard, indeed, from the time I knew it was all of no use; and that, hoard what earnings I might, they were never to take me to him! But a short while ago, there came a letter by post, not like the rest, sad, and short, and cold, but like a leave-taking letter, telling all—that is in the heart, because there is no further use in concealment. In that letter, uncle, he explained why he had never asked me to join him, why he had ceased to remind me of my promise to be his wife; because, prosper as he might, a great peril was always suspended over him; and that never, *never* would he expose me to the shame which might at any moment overtake him and darken his remaining days."

"Ay, at any moment—at *any* moment!" muttered the unhappy old man.

"He even told me the cause of all this trouble, uncle," added Esther, in a faint voice, "and *very* terrible was it to me to learn for truth what I had so often guessed and guessed till my heart ached again. But from all he said of his feelings and his reasons for abstaining from making me his wife, I determined instantly to set out for America, and join him. The money I first collected is still untouched. For though I had given up all thoughts of the voyage, I should have taken shame to myself to have used a shilling of it for any other purpose."

"Poor girl!—good girl!" moaned the father of Luke.

"And next week, uncle, I shall embark at Liverpool. You will not betray me to my brother! No, no, you will not betray me. Since my poor mother's death, I have not held myself accountable for my doings to any at Norcroft; where I was forced to hear my cousin spoken of in terms that made my blood freeze in my veins."

"You are going—you, a young and delicate girl,"

are literally going to join him in America?" faltered the astonished clerk.

"Since it was humbleness and not pride which made him forbear to ask me," added Esther in a lower voice, "why should I hesitate! From something in his letter, however, a fear he expressed that you might have wanted courage to execute a grievous commission with which he had charged you, I thought it better, before I sailed from England forever, to visit this place, to visit Warlingwood. From the way in which you found me occupied this morning, you can understand my purpose. It is fulfilled. Thank God, it is fulfilled. Thank God, I had strength of heart to seek out that horrible place. For it was not too late, uncle. It was necessary that one of us should reach the spot. And now that my task is done, I can go in peace. Unless, (since you say that the man who was here, just now, is the bitter enemy of Luke,) unless the sight of the lilies should have awakened his suspicions—all is now safe."

"Esther!" said old Downing, removing his trembling hand from before his face and placing it in that of his niece. "Esther, you are a good girl—a good and faithful girl! You must take me with you. If I can manage to quit this place by stealth, so as to meet you at Bristol—"

"You can—you can!" interrupted his niece, anticipating with joy what was to follow.

"In that case, my poor child, I will go with you to America."

CHAPTER XI.

This world's wealth, when I think on

Its pride and a' the lave o't,

Fie, fie, on silly coward man,

That he should be the slave o't.

Oh! why should fate such pleasure take

Life's dearest hands untwining,

Or why sae sweet a flower as love

Depend on Fortune's shining!

BURNS.

WHILE these painful scenes were passing in the quiet village of Hartington, the amiable family so singularly frustrated in their expectations of inheritance, were nearly as much to be pitied as Esther and her uncle.

The first, if not the only care of the two girls, was their mother. At her age, the sudden loss of nearly two thirds of her income was a loss indeed. The prudence of Mrs. Colston's habits of life during the first years of her widowhood, afforded sufficient proof that the splendors of affluence were not essential to her happiness. But the indulgence of the last ten had now become habitual; and hard indeed was it to be forced to reduce her establishment, discard her attached servants, renounce her comfortable abode, and the carriage which her increasing infirmities rendered almost a necessary of life. To secure all these enjoyments to their kind mother by a proper settlement, the girls had kept single during their uncle's lifetime; and now, it was impossible not to regret their over-solicitude. For in the event of the marriage of either, Sir Clement would unquestionably have bestowed a dowry such as might have afforded some compensation for the eventual loss of the estate.

On every side, their prospects were gloomy. The comfort of their mother's declining years was destroyed; nor would either of them listen to the generous eagerness with which a home was offered to her both by Colonel Larpent, and Sir Henry Fletcher.

"Remember the fable of the old man and the

bundle of sticks," said Cecilia, when the latter pleaded for the immediate fulfilment of their engagement. "To strengthen each other, we must remain together. Poor mamma must not be deserted in her change of fortunes by the children to whom she has devoted her life."

"Do I ask you to desert her?" was the earnest rejoinder. "No, no! I would not have you lose sight of her, dearest Cissy, for a single day. You must persuade her and Sophia to reside with us. There is room enough for you all, in my rambling old barrack of a house at Newtown Fletcher. I cannot, indeed, pretend to lodge Mrs. Colston so well, or make her so comfortable, as she has been in her charming house in Bruton Street. But she is sure of the rough and ready hospitality of an Irish hearth; and, while you rule over both, my own dearest, as their lady and mistress, I cannot fancy that the old lady will be very unhappy under my roof. Besides, she will enjoy what you and yours seem to prize beyond many a more brilliant privilege—the power of doing good. My people and place have been sadly neglected, Cissy. I shall not be able to spare you to look after them half so much as they require; and it would be indeed an act of humanity were Mrs. Colston and Sophia to superintend the schools I am building, and carry out a hundredth part of the plans you had formed for Hartington!"

Cecilia Colston was gratified, but not convinced. At her mother's time of life, it was essential that she should be independent; and both daughters fully coincided in her project of retiring to the country, after disposing of the lease and furniture of her London house.

But when the moment came for quitting it, all three appeared to feel, for the first time, the hardness of the fate that had befallen them. Not a room in the house, scarcely an article of furniture, but was endeared to the girls by association with some moment or incident of their happy courtships. It was not the good taste and elegance of the establishment, (which had so readily secured a tenant eager to purchase everything as it stood,) that moved their regret. But there was something of desecration in leaving to the enjoyment of strangers, those pleasant drawing-rooms where their young lives had passed so happily; and where each in succession had found her girlish happiness completed, by a declaration of attachment from the man she loved.

A small cottage residence on the border of Hertfordshire, had been engaged by Mrs. Colston, till a complete settlement was effected in their affairs. For, though neither Aldridge nor Mr. Boscawen, her London lawyer, afforded much encouragement to commence the amicable suit suggested in the first instance, the cost of which would be a heavy burthen on her reduced income, Colonel Larpent saw things with more sanguine eyes. On two points he was firm as a rock; viz., his determination to overcome Miss Colston's disinterested scruples about becoming his wife, and his advice to resist to the utmost the pretensions of one, who, with the perspicacity of a shrewd mind and honest heart, he had never doubted to be an impostor.

"In offering to Mrs. Colston the means of carrying on the suit," said he to Sophia, after endeavoring to stimulate anew the courage of the family, "I am incurring no risk; so do not, I entreat, renew your praises of my generosity. On the contrary, I am merely securing a noble fortune to my wife. For my wife you are, and must be! With your

equitable principles, you cannot act so unfairly by me as withdraw your plighted word, merely because your mother is forced for a time to reduce her establishment."

"You must make allowance for our being at present a little stunned by the blow that has befallen us," replied Sophia. "It requires something more than philosophy to enable one to meet with composure so sudden an overturn of all the projects of one's life. For years past, all our thought has been what we were to do for mamma on the death of Sir Clement, and how her comfort and happiness were to be best secured. Not one of the old servants but had a pension in prospect. And to see all this suddenly extinguished! To feel that, instead of being able to assist her, and reward the others, we are about to become a burthen to her!"

"That, at least, is your own fault," interrupted the colonel. "You well know how eagerly both Cecilia and yourself are waited for in homes of your own!"

"And would my wounded pride be soothed, think you, by becoming a burthen on you?" cried Sophia, with a vivid blush; "on you, dear Charles, who have already three children to provide for."

"Ah, there it is!" cried the blunt soldier. "Half the misery of the business, if not the whole, is a case of wounded pride. Matters might have been a thousand times worse. Mrs. Colston, with nearly a thousand a year, has surely enough for the common comforts of life. Yourself and your sister carry with you into the families into which you are about to marry, (yes, dearest, in spite of all your remonstrances and denials, I say again, *about* to marry,) the endowments of youth, beauty, virtue, talent, and family connexion. Nothing wanting, you see, *but* money; which, when you fancied it your own, you prized so lightly, that you have taught me to measure its value as you then did. If you continue to dwell thus bitterly on your loss, I shall, in fact, begin to fancy your former high-mindedness assumed."

These suggestions tended to brighten with a smile the dejected countenance of Sophia. But they did not blind her to the fact, that to bestow her hand on the noble-minded soldier, would be a serious injury to his children; and she persisted so bravely in her refusal, that, unwilling to mistrust the steadfastness of her affection, Colonel Larpent began to attribute her resolution to a conviction that, at some future time, her fortune would be restored to her, and all her former projects realized. If such the cause of her hesitation, it was his own fault; for it was *he* who had inspired her with faith in the tenability of her claims.

In the vague hope of being able to destroy the work of his hands, he hurried to consult Mr. Boscawen, the family lawyer, to whom the care of their interests was intrusted; and eagerly endeavored to enlist his advice against the commencement of the amicable suit he had hitherto so warmly advocated.

The prim solicitor looked a little surprised at a change so sudden. But having seen Colonel Larpent in company with his fair clients throughout the interviews to which their extraordinary dilemma had given rise, and concluded him to be one of their nearest relations, he did not hesitate to confide to him the exact state of the case.

"Some weeks have occurred," said he, "since I had any communication on the subject from the Miss Colstons; and I am consequently in hopes that the propositions which I was then employed to trans-

rait to them, were the means of altering their views concerning the lawsuit."

An exclamation of "*propositions*," was with some difficulty repressed on the lips of the blunt soldier; for nothing of the kind had been confided to him by Mrs. Colston or her daughters; and he was unwilling that Boscawen (whom he supposed to be apprized of the terms on which he stood in the family,) should suppose that reserves, in matters of pecuniary interest, existed between himself and Sophia.

"Little as I foresaw such a compromise at the commencement of this untoward affair," resumed the lawyer, "I cannot but admit that the marriage proposed by Sir Mark, affords the only probable chance of securing any share or portion of the Colston estates to the daughters of the late colonel. Peace-making is not exactly the office of my profession," continued he with a grim smile; "nor am I inclined to lose the thousands which such proceedings as those suggested by yourself to the young ladies, would have put into my pocket. Still, sir, candor forces me to admit that nothing can be more liberal than the intentions entertained by Sir Mark. In the event of Miss Colston's acceptance of his hand, he bestows a marriage-portion of thirty thousand pounds on her sister; and on the old lady, an annuity of five hundred per annum. Admit that nothing can be handsomer. I doubt, indeed, whether the late Sir Clement would in his lifetime have done as much."

"Nothing, indeed, can be handsomer," mechanically repeated his astounded auditor. "And, as you observe, a lawsuit under such circumstances is out of the question."

He scarcely knew what he was saying. He scarcely knew in what manner he made his exit out of the chamber of Boscawen and Hatch, and with his hat over his eyes, stumbled down the worn and dirty stone staircase leading from their dreary den to Lincoln's Inn fields. The amazement which had fallen on the mind of Sophia on Sir Mark Colston's sudden inbreak at Hartington Hall, was in fact scarcely more bewildering than that of poor Larpent, as he jumped into the first hackney coach that presented itself, conscious that his perturbation of mind rendered him no object for the streets.

To be forced to resign her, after three years of unequalled love and confidence—resign her, at a moment when he had fancied her more than ever his own;—when he had fancied his affection a necessary and a sufficient consolation for her loss of fortune! And above all, to resign her with contempt and loathing in his heart!

His whole view of human nature was changed. If the noble-minded Sophia Colston had succumbed to pecuniary temptation, *who* was to stand upright? If the candid Sophia Colston had stooped to deceive by false pretences the man who so implicitly trusted to her, what woman was henceforward to be believed! So plausibly, too, as she had disguised her flagitious intentions, under a pretence of generous consideration for his interests! So speciously as the whole family had hurried their departure for the country, in order to be out of the way of remonstrance or reproach, on the public announcement of their wretched compromise with the man they had proclaimed an impostor and swindler!

No wonder the distracted man rushed home for the solitary indulgence of his indignation. At Col. Larpent's age, for he was on the verge of forty, and more than one silvery thread was intermingled with his rich brown hair, the affections of the heart

are neither lightly bestowed, nor easily resumed.

His passion was not the impetuous but transitory passion of a boy. His love for Sophia was all the stronger for reverence by which it was sobered; like a lamp that burns brightest and longest, when the flame is not allowed to rise too high.—And forced to abjure not only all hope of making her his wife, but all power of remembering her with affection, his future life became a blank. His children—the children she had adopted as her own—the children whom he had ceased to consider motherless since she had called them hers, came running to meet him; and as he looked at their bright eyes and thoughtless smiles, and reflected how grievous a change had been wrought in their destinies, he was forced to lift the youngest little girl in his arms, and conceal his face amid her flowing curls, that his gathering tears might fall unnoticed. What was to become of them? What was to become of *him*?

Winter having been absorbed by the negotiations between the two branches of the Colston family, the spring was already come, to afford a fair pretext, where pretext was wanting, for removal from town; and Colonel Larpent, who was leading a London life, only to favor his daily visits to Bruton Street, felt that it would be impossible to remain there after a shock which had rendered him a second time as much a widower as the loss of his amiable wife four years before. He must instantly leave town—he must instantly leave England. There was not a spot in the kingdom sufficiently far from *her* to enable him to breathe in peace.

As to these three little helpless creatures, whose buoyant spirits would be insupportable, he would leave them at the rectory with their grandmother. From the moment of her daughter's death, indeed, Mrs. Wigswell would fain have adopted them; and never were the old people so happy as when they could get their grandchildren into the country for a long visit.

The following morning, therefore, he escorted them, under the care of their faithful old nurse, to Hartington. It was necessary he should explain to the fond grandmother, by whom his preference for Sophia had been first encouraged, that all engagement between them was at an end; and, a little to his indignation, the old lady, who had measured the merit of his future wife a little too much by the weight of her strong box, attributing his change of purpose to prudential motives, warmly seconded his project of going abroad.

"His being out of the way at such a time would get over a thousand little unpleasantnesses. Since he had been so wise as to consider his children's prospects before his own inclinations, Miss Colston would no doubt follow his example during his absence, and make a comfortable settlement for life."

Colonel Larpent turned away with a sickening heart. Old and young were against him. No one saw cause for regret or blame in a decision by which *his* happiness was marred for life.

He almost regretted that he had not sent down the children to Hartington with their nurse, unaccompanied. But he had wanted to see the place again, before he quitted England. It was *very* dear to him, *very* sacred. There were deposited the remains of that lost Eliza who, on her deathbed, had recommended him to renew, at some future time, for the sake of his infants, the happy domestic life they had enjoyed together. And there had commenced his perception of the excellence of the high-minded girl, who had at length consented to become his wife.

Everything had then favored his courtship. The old lady at the rectory contrived to have him staying with her, whenever Mrs. Colston and her daughters were on a visit to Sir Clement; nor was there a spot in the fine old park, or a drive in the adjacent woods, but was hallowed by recollections of Sophia.

Often and often had they strolled together into the village, devising plans of future improvement; how the cheerful green was to be respected, the horse-pond embanked, the lane widened and drained; and school-houses and alms-houses erected on the site of the sawpit opposite the Black Lion. And while the colonel examined with the eye of a practised engineer the capabilities of the lane and the Hams, more than once had they paused at old Downing's cottage, on pretence of begging one of his choice carnations; but in reality, to bestow a few kindly words on the poor old man, whose family misfortunes rendered him an object of compassion at the Hall.

Very grievous was it to revolve these recollections in his mind, now that he was visiting Hartington without one cheering hope. Spring was budding from every bough. The orchards were white with blossoms, the hedges fragrant with violets, the gaudy flowers of the crown imperial flaunting in the cottage gardens, the meadows clothed with the emerald green of their first verdure. Everything was sweet, and gay, and vivid. The young leaves of the lime trees on the green already quivered in the breeze. The beauty of the year was expanding in every point of the landscape.

As soon as the good rector had sunk into his evening doze, and his lady retired to install her grandchildren in their nursery, Colonel Larpent accordingly sauntered out into the village, to pause at every well-remembered spot consecrated by memories of the past.

After pausing in the church-yard to peruse, as if for the first time, the marble tablet inserted in the old sandstone wall of the church, "Sacred to the memory of Eliza, the beloved wife of Lieutenant Colonel Larpent of the 5th Dragoon Guards," and containing a just tribute to her virtues—he turned with a swelling heart into the narrow gravel path leading to the lane; secretly reproaching himself for having too well obeyed her injunctions; fancying, perhaps, his present misery the penalty of his faithlessness to the dead.

With his eyelids swollen with unshed tears, he did not care to retrace the village. Turning, therefore, towards the Hams, between the high hawthorn hedges now almost in full leaf, he was passing without notice old Downing's garden, full of the last time he had visited the spot, on the plea of begging for Sophia a flower from a far-famed macrophylla rose-tree, (a present brought by Luke from the gardens at Ashburnham, for years the pride and glory of the poor old clerk,) when the sound of angry voices in the garden caused him to turn his eyes towards the cottage.

The persons disputing together were strangers to him; nor, unless old Downing had died or been superseded in his office during the period he was so deeply engrossed by the affairs of the Colston family, could he account for their presence on the spot: the man being somewhat his own senior, and far too showily dressed either for that age or the place he was visiting; while the girl who was addressing him, was attired in humble mourning, but of striking grace and beauty. From the color of her hair and character of her general appearance, Colonel Larpent inferred that she was habitually

pale, and habitually reserved; and that the flush streaming on her cheek, and the vivacity apparent in her words, were produced by some unusual motive of excitement.

Impossible not to connect these demonstrations with the unsatisfactory looking individual who was hurrying with unmeasured steps down the pathway; while the poor young girl, with dilated eyes and heaving bosom, stood firm upon the threshold of the cottage, as if determined to guard it from intrusion.

Had Colonel Larpent been aware of the relation in which she stood to his father-in-law's faithful servant, John Downing, he would have instantly stopped, and offered his services as the redresser of her grievances, whatever they might be. But he believed these people to be new comers in the village; and with the instinctive reserve of a shy Englishman, averse to intruding into the affairs of strangers, hurried onwards to the Hams—leaving the lovers—or husband and wife—or whoever or whatever John Downing's successors might be, to resume their quarrel at leisure.

How little did he surmise, as he set foot on the velvet herbage of the Hams, and saw the water-weeds crested with their April bloom, waving with every ripple of the stream, how little did he surmise that the man whom he was secretly characterizing as a "vulgar fellow," was the one on whom, in the course of the last four-and-twenty hours, he had been lavishing such a variety of still bitterer epithets!

On his return home, to share the frugal parsonage supper, and express his final wishes concerning the children, (for he was to cross the country by Romney to Dover at an early hour the following morning,) Mrs. Wigswell, who had hailed him on his arrival that afternoon with an exclamation that never did she see a man so altered in appearance in so short a time, became of opinion that his evening walk must have done him worlds of harm—so much paler was he than before.

He was beginning to feel seriously anxious concerning his health; and having furnished her with the address of the banker at Lausanne to whom she was to forward her letters, and of the man of business to whom she was to refer in greater emergencies, Colonel Larpent became so embarrassed by her questions, that he tried to divert her attention from himself by talking of the village and its changes.

"Yes! you must admit that Sir Mark is not behindhand with his improvements," rejoined the rector's lady. "As my husband truly says, there cannot be a stronger proof of his confidence in his right, than the readiness with which he is expending such sums of money on the estate."

"The roads are certainly in a very different state from what I left them," replied the colonel listlessly; "and I understand that the dilapidated park palings are to be replaced by a substantial stone wall."

"Of four miles in extent. A fine time for the masons!" rejoined Mrs. Wigswell. "But there are workmen employed on the property in every direction."

"And do you find this man a personal acquisition?" demanded her son-in-law, with painful interest in the question.

"There is not, of course, the person in the three kingdoms who, to my husband, could replace poor old Sir Clement!" was Mrs. Wigswell's evasive reply.

"Still, you see nearly as much of this Sir Mark as of the late baronet?"

"He has not been wanting in attention to us," replied the old lady. "But perhaps I am difficult about manners and appearance; you, my dear colonel, and the Colston family, having assisted to make me so. For I admit that—But it is foolish to find fault with such trifles, where the main point is as it should be. Sir Mark Colston is a pious, benevolent, and considerate man; and the cut of his coat and tones of his voice ought consequently to meet with indulgence."

"I am sorry that you cannot speak more flatteringly of him," persisted the colonel; "I was in hopes you would have found him a pleasant neighbor."

"Nothing and no one could have made it pleasant to poor Wigswell to visit at the Hall," replied the old lady. "I don't say, however, but that it *might* have been pleasanter than it is. I am afraid that the circumstances of Sir Mark in early life, gave him a taste for low company. My husband complains that a strange set of people are always about him. But perhaps things may mend. He talks of marrying. He seems *anxious* to marry. Sir Mark himself told me that his only motive for hurrying his improvements at the old place, was his desire that Lady Colston might find all complete on her arrival."

"And did he state who Lady Colston was to be?" faltered the colonel, still paler than before.

"I asked him; for he spoke so jocosely as to encourage the question; and he told me, laughing all the while, that it was a great secret; that I had seen the lady, that the match would probably startle me a little; but that he hoped I should prove a friend to his wife. I am to blame, however, for alluding to the subject," said the old lady, checking herself; "for I remember he made it his earnest request that I would mention it to no living soul."

The colonel felt as if his very breath were failing. To divert Mrs. Wigswell's observation from his emotion, he tried to talk of old Downing.

"Was the old clerk released from his unhappy life, or had he only retired from office?"

"If you were able to delay your departure for a day or two," replied the old lady, "you would hear him officiate on Sunday, as clearly and steadily as ever."

"And who, then, is the young woman that inhabits his cottage? He had no daughter, I think?" said the colonel.

"A niece has been on a visit to him, the winter through, poor old man; for it was too trying, under all the circumstances, to spend the long evenings alone. Not, however, that John Downing seems much the better for Esther's visit; being more broken within the last three months, than by all his family misfortunes. One seldom sees him out of doors now. One seldom sees him but at church. He and my husband are both of them ten years older since the death of poor Sir Clement. One never knew, my dear colonel, till the poor old gentleman was taken away, what consequence he was of to the happiness of all at Hartington."

Colonel Larpent, anxious to retire early to rest that he might be up in time to cross the marshes towards Dover before the sailing of the Calais packet, was content to let the subject drop; and

when he bestowed his last kiss and blessing on his sleeping children, in the twilight of the following morning, the other inmates of the parsonage were also asleep. The post-chaise was brought to the stable gate. Not a creature was stirring in the village, except the cock that was strutting and crowing before the Black Lion, as if chanting the praises of the man whose money had filled up the ruts and removed the standing pools from its favorite beat, to create the capital road along which the traveller was bowling. It was not for some days afterwards—it was not till the hurry, noise, and inconvenience of embarkation in a steam-packet, landing at the custom-house, passports, and commissionnaires had subsided, and he found himself a fugitive from the native country he was beginning to abhor, at the tearing rate of the *malle poste*, that the singular scene in Downing's garden occurred to the recollection of Colonel Larpent.

The presence of that pleasing-looking young woman had been explained. She was the niece and inmate of the old clerk. She was the Esther Harman of whom he had previously heard mention, as the sweetheart of one of Downing's unfortunate sons. But *who* was the man? *Who* was the coarse-looking—harsh-spoken—gaudily-dressed man? the man to whom the girl had exclaimed as he hurried half-sullenly, and half-defyingly down the footpath, "You have persecuted us enough! You have prevented our going to America! But if justice is to be had in this world, you shall not haunt us, in this way, like an evil spirit, to hunt the old man into his grave!"

What could this mean? Who was the fellow that had excited the poor girl to such an outbreak! Since they were not husband and wife, (a connexion which the instinct of his sex seemed to have suggested as an excuse for any amount of brutality,) the colonel began to fear that all was not as it should be in Downing's cottage.

At length, the notion darted into his mind that the man he had seen under circumstances so disgraceful, might *perhaps* be Sir Mark Colston—the future husband of his Sophia!

Colonel Larpent had heard him described as coarse and vulgar; and though it was to be expected that the new proprietor of Hartington would be attired in a suit of sables, Sir Mark was not the man, especially if a wooer, to concede more than the exact three months of mourning due to the memory of a kinsman.

He now began to blame himself for not having interfered between the angry girl and her crest-fallen visitor; and above all, for not having more closely cross-questioned Mrs. Wigswell. There was unquestionably some mystery connected with the couple thus strangely brought together.

Nothing more favorable than travel to the development of reverie. Before Colonel Larpent reached Lausanne, he had framed so many hundred romances connecting together the various branches of the Colston family and John Downing's cottage, that it was not wonderful he should think it worth while to despatch a private and confidential letter to his old acquaintance, Aldridge, the Lewes attorney, suggesting private inquiries concerning the parties.

CHAPTER XII.

She lies upon her pillow, pale,
And moans within her sleep:
Or wakeneth with a patient smile
And striveth not to weep.

PROCTOR.

MEANWHILE the removal of Mrs. Colston and her daughters to their new residence, was attended with fewer vexations than had been anticipated by any member of the family. To quit a large London house for a small one, is a mortifying thing. But to remove from London to the country, under any possible circumstances, creates so many novel interests and ensures so many refreshing enjoyments, as to afford little leisure for regret. The spring was opening so deliciously, and the small but well-planted gardens at Langley Bank were so bright with lilacs, and so peopled with nightingales, that the two girls, who had been long weaned from country pleasures, could scarcely contain their delight. It was such a relief to escape from the cross-questioning of their fashionable circle—from the condolences of pretended friends—from the impotent advice of busy-bodies!

But, above all, both of them were sustained, throughout the changes created by their change of fortunes, by the certainty of being unchangeably beloved. The reverse of fortune they had experienced, had stimulated rather than relaxed the courtship of those to whom, in their brighter days, they had been a little too apt to play the tyrant; and both Sir Henry Fletcher and Colonel Larpent were to come down and visit them, the moment they felt sufficiently settled in their new abode.

"Not that there is the least chance of Fletcher's waiting for *that*," whispered Cissy to her sister, as they were strolling together through the shrubberies, the evening after their arrival in Hertfordshire. "His impetuous temper will never submit to wait till he is summoned. We shall be sure to have him at Langley before anything is in its place, or we have a room ready to receive him. And there is really some excuse for a person's hurrying out of town in such weather. Summer has come before its time."

Sophia replied by a sober discussion of the capabilities of the cottage, and the possibility of adapting the few favorite articles of furniture they had retained, to their present wants. But though not altogether prepared to enlarge upon the lover-like impetuosity of Colonel Larpent, (who was ten years older than the affianced husband of Cecilia,) she felt convinced that many days would not elapse before he also found his way into Hertfordshire. A little disappointed that he had not accompanied Sir Henry to Bruton Street, to see them off, she attributed his absence to his better knowledge of the world, than his wild Irish brother-in-law. Already a family man, he knew by experience the inconvenience of having strangers present in the hurry of leaving town for a journey; above all, of leaving, as they were doing, a house they were to see no more.

Still, as the days passed on, and everything was arranged in their cheerful drawing-room, dining-room, and study, as though Langley Bank had known no other inmates than its present tenants, flowers disposed about the house, and Rover established on the hearth-rug with the most dogged sense of proprietorship, even Sophia began to think that Colonel Larpent, if he did not come, might at least write to explain the cause of his absence.

For Sir Henry Fletcher was there. The joyous warm-hearted Fletcher was nearly as much at home there as Rover. He had helped to move the furniture. He had helped to place the flowers. He had even helped to mow the lawn. It was even he who had found out a corner in the drawing-room for Mrs. Colston's arm-chair and work-table, secure from any influx of draughts, after all the rest of the party had given up the point. But for him, they should have disbelieved the possibility of their little meadow and orchard affording pasturage for a couple of cows, in addition to the pony which was to draw their mother's pony-chaise. But for him, they should never have devised the partnership-account with a neighboring farmer, for facilitating the transit of their letters to and from the post.

Sir Henry had, in short, made himself not only useful but indispensable. An Irish education, he pretended, had accustomed him to make shifts; and he claimed to be the best person in the world for knowing how to do without anything and everything it contained, so long as those he loved shared his deprivations.

His cheerful spirits, in short, converted every inconvenience into an enjoyment; and before the expiration of a week he had so wrought upon the affections of the whole family, as to obtain the old lady's intervention with Cecilia to relent in his favor. All was now settled. Before the close of the month, their wedding was to be quietly and privately solemnized in the parish church; and before the end of the summer, Mrs. Colston and Sophia, in spite of the delight they were already beginning to take in the cottage, were to join them at Newtown Fletcher, to spend the autumn months.

Still no Colonel Larpent! At first his absence and silence were freely discussed among them; Mrs. Colston fearing he might be ill—Sophia, that some of the children were indisposed; and the happy lovers convinced that he was busied in preparation for the same felicity that awaited themselves. But as the weeks passed on, they ceased to talk of him, tried not to look anxious when the letter bag was placed upon the table, and endeavored to appear full of faith, when Sophia, in adverting to her solitary evening walks with Rover, described them as in the opposite direction from the London road.

But when alone together, Sir Henry and Cecilia argued over the matter without reserve; the latter asserting her fears that her sister's dignified reserve had wounded the over-susceptible nature of the colonel; the former, pshawing away all allusion to Larpent's sensibility, and declaring him to be a cold-blooded fellow.

"He may not have fancied himself formally invited by my mother. He may perhaps feel affronted," pleaded Cecilia, who was sincerely attached to her amiable and gentlemanly brother-in-law.

"Affronted! hang him. Is this a moment for forms and ceremonies?" cried the impetuous Sir Henry. "He ought either to have carried the walls by assault, as I did; or written to explain what kept him away."

"Depend on it he would have done so but for some accident—some unfortunate misunderstanding," urged Cecilia. "I know him. I feel sure of him. There does not exist a more honorable or high-principled man."

"Or a colder hearted."

"No, no! Will you never believe that people feel as they ought, because they are a little less

wrong-headed than yourself! Believe me, Larpent is as truly attached to Sophia as a man can be; and you would do me a real kindness and favor by setting off to London, to ascertain what has befallen him."

"Set off to London! when here, by your side, my own dearest, I can just as readily supply the answer! The illness that has befallen him is simply the malady common to his years, an ague-fit of prudence."

"You mean, then, that I am to prepare myself for finding you, ten years hence, ungrateful and unprincipled! Quite right to shake your head! You would do better to hide your face. But if you expect me to forgive your illiberality, my dear Fletcher, off with you to London, and do my spiriting gently."

Sir Henry obeyed, though not very gently; for he grumbled sadly at going; and the day following his arrival in town, a hurried letter communicated the startling intelligence that Colonel Larpent had left town, that he was supposed to have even quitted England. His house was let for a year; his family removed into the country.

The blow was borne by Sophia Colston as she was in the habit of bearing everything, with the best of sense and the best of feeling. But Cissy was less patient; and when Sir Henry, after two days' absence, which he bemoaned as though it were two months, returned to the cottage, she seemed disposed to resent upon him the scandalous conduct of Colonel Larpent. In the warmth of her indignation in behalf of her ill-used sister, she could not forgive poor Fletcher for belonging to the same sex as the fugitive.

"Don't be unjust!" cried he. "Don't quarrel with me for what is no fault of mine; or quarrel with Larpent for what is only *half* a fault of his. Your sister broke off the match. He obeyed her but too implicitly. What would you have said to me, pray, had I resisted your orders to hurry off to London, when I wanted so much to remain here!"

"It is cruel to laugh at me. The cases, Heaven knows, are not parallel; and you, who love Sophia as a sister, ought to feel as indignant as I do."

"And cannot you see, my darling, that I am trying to make the best of a bad business! Were I to meet Larpent again, it would cost me some forbearance to abstain from knocking him down. But nothing should induce me to exchange a word with him again. To tell you the truth, (for how can I keep back anything from you, even though perhaps I ought to have my tongue burnt for blabbing,) to tell you the truth, dear Cissy, I am far more disgusted than yourself by the colonel's conduct; for I find that, previous to making up his mind to sneak out of the business, he had an interview with Boscawen, in order to ascertain, definitely, whether the smallest chance existed of your recovery of the estate."

"Enough, enough!" cried Cecilia, stopping her ears. "For mercy's sake never let me hear his name again! That a woman so every way superior as Sophia should have squandered her affections on so pitiful a creature!"

"You would have stopped your ears in far greater indignation, my dear girl," rejoined Sir Henry, "had you been present while I was cross-questioning old Boscawen, and giving him his instructions about the settlements. Will you believe that he persists in regretting the hastiness

with which Sophia declined the overtures of Sir Mark! Concerning her preference for Larpent, he seems to know nothing; and, under all the circumstances, it was not for me to enlighten his mind. But he protests that, throughout his negotiations with the fellow at Hartington, nothing can have been more gentlemanly, liberal, or respectful than his conduct. All Sir Mark now seems to desire is, that you should regard him as a kinsman, who has done no more than maintain his just rights, as any other man would have done. And Boscawen declares that his proposals for the hand of Sophia, were actuated quite as much by the desire of compensation to some part of your father's family, as by the ambition of a man who, by his peculiar circumstances, has been kept out of the sphere of society to which he is entitled, to replace himself in it by an union with a well-bred, well-connected, and well-conditioned wife."

"You really seem as if you were pleading his cause," murmured Cecilia.

"I am repeating only the words of old Boscawen, who appears to have a sort of fatherly interest in your affairs, and cannot bear that you should be wholly ousted out of the Hartington property. Moreover, dearest Cissy, I am just now so marvellously in conceit with matrimony, that I cannot help saying I think Sophy would be happier with the power of doing good on an extended scale, than as the repining single woman in narrow circumstances, into which she must subside, when, in the course of nature, her mother is removed."

"But since you have promised that she shall reside with us!"

"Quite a different thing from residing in a house of her own, with half-a-dozen thousand a year to expend in making people happy. Children of her own, tenants of her own, poor of her own, would serve to develop the prodigious hump of benevolence with which that excellent head of hers seems to be encumbered."

Cecilia heaved a heavy sigh. Now that her vulgar cousin was out of sight, she was almost afraid that Sir Harry's view of the case was just.

"I am not afraid you should attribute my change of opinion to covetousness of the dowry promised by the new baronet," added Sir Henry, laughing, "or I should think it right to apprise you that, if Sophy became his wife fifty times over, I would accept nothing at his hands. We have enough to live and be happy on, Cissy, without pledging our independence to any one."

This assurance was rewarded with one of Cecilia's sweetest smiles. But it was a smile that soon gave way to a careful expression, when she came to reflect on the saddened years in store for her dear sister. She, too, began almost to regret that the nature of Sophia's engagements to the time-serving Larpent, had been such as to prevent her giving even a moment's consideration to the proposals of Sir Mark Colston. Though his exterior was unpleasing, his conduct afforded evidence of the most amiable disposition; and it was thenceforward included in her secret list of grievances against the treacherous colonel, that he had been the means of preventing Sophia from assuming at Hartington Hall that place to which she was so well entitled, and to which she would have rendered such ample justice.

Though the correspondence of the Colstons with Hartington Rectory was now modified by the awk-

wardness of any allusion to Colonel Larpent, Mrs. Wigswell, believing that the engagement of her widowed son-in-law had been broken off by mutual desire, felt no scruple in describing her joy at being in possession of her grandchildren for a twelve month to come; and believing also that nothing would afford greater consolation to the two kind-hearted girls than to hear of the prosperity of a spot they loved so well, the old lady's letters were filled with accounts of the improvements effected by Sir Mark, and the benefits he was conferring on the village.

"Forgotten and superseded everywhere!" faintly escaped the lips of poor Sophia. But a moment afterwards, the troubled element resumed its usual pure serenity; and she asked forgiveness of Heaven if, in a single bitter moment, she had overlooked the happiness of the greatest number, in her solitary cares.

Meanwhile the preparations for Cecilia's wedding were nearly completed. The simple *trousseau* preparing for her, was already sent home; and Sophia could but feel that the greatest of her remaining comforts was about to be withdrawn. How should she exist during so many solitary hours at Langley, when her sister was gone! For Mrs. Colston who, thanks to the agitations of the last year, had progressed ten in age and infirmities, was now in the habit of dozing away her evenings; and her poor daughter felt that her frame of mind was no longer such as to render it either pleasant or profitable to fall back upon her own reflections. Miss Colston sometimes thought she should be happier if officiating as governess to the children of that beloved Charles to whom she had found the cruel courage to refuse her hand.

Of those children, so long adopted as her own, she was perpetually thinking; perpetually wondering what they were about, and dreading lest they should be worried by the over-solicitude of their grandmother. They had not proved ungrateful. They had not deserted her. There was no reason that she should withdraw her affections from them.

At Hartington Rectory, however, the little creatures were enjoying themselves with a zest for country pleasures, known only to children whose walks have been long restricted to the dreary, sooty, flowerless monotony of a London square, or the formal parade of the parks. Grandmama's garden and grandpapa's village had always constituted their Eden; and now that there was no prudent father at hand to control the ramblings of the nurses, they were perpetually exploring the green lanes of the neighborhood, or bringing home garlands of wild-flowers from Waring-wood. Nowhere were the honeysuckles, in which they delighted, so abundant; and the silver bells of the lilies of the valley were succeeded by a profusion of wild strawberries, with which it was the delight of the little girls to fill their baskets for the breakfast-table of Mr. and Mrs. Wigswell.

It was in one of these expeditions they made acquaintance with John Downing's niece. With feelings very different from those which directed the steps of those happy and innocent creatures along the Hams, and into the entangled recesses of the wood, did Esther, day after day, and as if by mechanical impulse, wander towards that fatal haunt; fancying, perhaps, that her prayers would ascend more surely thence to Heaven, than from under the ill-fated roof of the cottage.

On the very spot from whence an evil eye had

watched the fatal encounter between her cousins, did she love to sit—wan, weary, heartbroken; the tears stealing down her face whenever the unusual sweetness of the atmosphere reminded her that summer was come again; that years of sorrow were waving their leaden wings triumphantly over her head; and that she was farther than ever from all hope of reunion with him for whose sake alone those years had been hitherto endured without a murmur. Sometimes her quiet sorrow burst forth into moans and ejaculations. The day for patience is past. The disappointments she had undergone, the persecutions by which they had been imbibed, had rendered her desperate. If her arch-enemy of the Hall had chanced to encounter her in that lonely spot, he had twice as much to fear from the meeting, as the half-distracted Esther.

For with him originated her present despair. True to his word, her uncle had prepared every thing for their departure for New York. With well-contrived precautions, all had been prearranged. A letter was prepared for the good pastor, acquainting him that his poor old clerk, desirous of having his eyes closed by his surviving son, and unwilling to discompose his fortitude by a solemn parting with his benefactor and friends of half a century, had preferred a furtive departure from the village. To his venerable comrade, Jukes the wheelwright, he bequeathed in this letter his household possessions; and having collected in a bundle the necessities for their journey, and stowed away in the poor old man's pocket-book all that remained to him of worldly self, they were literally in the act of quitting the cottage, on their way to the London road where public conveyances were attainable, when a shadow darkened the threshold, and Sir Mark Colston stood before them.

"You surely do not suppose, good Master Downing," said he, "that I could think of allowing you to quit this place, to quit England, without taking leave of one so much interested in your fortunes as myself!"

"My uncle is about to accompany me home, to visit my brothers," interposed Esther Harman, perceiving that the old man was incapable of articulating a word.

"So young, so fair, so false," cried Sir Mark, still affecting a sportive vein. "Your uncle knows better, my pretty Esther, than to offer a visit to your brothers, who, I find, have long turned their backs on everything bearing the name of Downing. You see I am well informed. From the moment I saw your face, my sweet Hetty, and determined that you and no other should be the lady of Hartington Hall, I made it my business to inquire chapter and verse of the history of the Downing and Harman families. Not a syllable has escaped me. I know all. And knowing all, you will understand that, on the eve of the sailing of the New York packet, I take especial care to prevent your risking, without my knowledge, so long a voyage. Night and day my eye is upon this house, and my hand extended over its inmates. Take off your bonnet, therefore, my good girl, and replace your uncle's Sunday coat in the chest. No travelling for either of you at present!"

Entreaties—prayers—tears—all were unavailing.

"The hour you quit Hartington, and a day before you are able to reach your destination," said Sir Mark, "the secret of Luke Downing will be in government keeping, the same ship that takes you to America, shall convey also the denouncement of

his guilt. I cannot afford to lose you as neighbors," continued he, with a grim smile, on hearing muttered curses escape the lips of the helpless old man. "The parish of Hartington must not be deprived of its active and excellent clerk; and still less can I bear to give up the hope of some day or other overcoming the repugnance of a girl, whom I can forgive for fancying herself too pretty for a hard-favored cross-grained fellow like myself. Don't turn away so pettishly, Esther! You shall be my wife yet; or Luke Donovan's neck will pay for your coy perversity."

Esther Harman, even amid her tears, felt almost thankful for the brutality of his courtship; since without reference to her uncle or cousin, it justified the hatred with which she was beginning to regard him. But when, hour after hour, and day after day, these threats and these sarcasms were renewed, her spirits sank under the ordeal, she grew peevish, nervous, and hysterical. Her poor old uncle was too thoroughly miserable to admit of her leaving him alone to his misfortunes; or she would have quitted the village to seek service elsewhere. And Sir Mark, feeling his advantage, pursued it with unmanly cruelty.

It was the first object of his heart to obtain her for a wife. By a marriage with Miss Colston, he had hoped to possess himself legitimately of the family estate. But this being impossible, he trusted by allying himself with John Downing's niece to secure the old man's secrecy and connivance. In either case, his matrimonial views were instigated by interested motives. But he was far from insensible to the youth and personal attraction of Esther Harman, and moreover fancied that, by selecting a wife from her class of life, he was not only securing popularity in the village, but inflicting a deadly mortification on the proud cousin by whom his suit had been so insolently rejected.

Every day, therefore, increased his impetuosity as a suitor. Presents from the Hall were constantly despatched to the humble homestead of the clerk; and though flowers and fruit, and fish and fowl, were as constantly returned, there was no possibility of evading the visits of the lord of the manor, who came with the most honorable intentions, and liberal proposals.

His visits became longer and longer, and his wooing more and more fervent; not alone because every hour spent in her company served to demonstrate the excellent qualities and personal charms of the young girl who had made so deep an impression on his rugged heart; but because he fancied, from the sullenness of resignation to which she was gradually giving way, that her mind was more disposed to compliance.

Impossible for him to surmise that, on the contrary, her altered manner arose from having unburdened her feelings to her cousin. She had written to Laurence Donovan. She had told him all;—all her struggles—all her sufferings—all her despair; obscurely hinting at the precautions by which she had made all safe at Warling-wood; and dwelling impressively on her hopes that he would devise some means of rescuing them from the tyranny which was rendering his father's last years on earth, a state of penance and torment.

After her letter was despatched, she felt easier. With a woman's implicit confidence in the omnipotence of the object of her love, Esther fancied that it needed only to appeal to the judgment of Luke, to obtain redress. He would devise means of

freeing them from these terrible thraldoms. She had not even hesitated to advert to the assiduities of which she was the object; convinced that, if he still loved her, jealousy would supply the expedients which even his sense of filial duty might perhaps fail to suggest.

Tormented, however, as she was, suffering as she was, hopeless as she was, nothing would have induced poor Esther to pour out her feelings upon paper, could she have conceived half the anguish that simple narrative was fated to excite in the soul of the banished man. Too well aware of the peril and helplessness of his own position, what was to become of those dear ones who were writhing in the grasp of his enemy; what—*what* was to become of them? In reply to the letter he had addressed to Sir Mark Colston, concerning the terms exacted from him, he had received an implicit intimation that his secret was safe, so long as he induced his father to exercise the same custody over some mystery equally momentous, which was deposited in his keeping. But how was poor Luke to exact this of the good old man; ignorant as he was to what extent the concession might compromise his character and safety! In his correspondence with the terrible man by whom he was menaced, the ill-fated exile felt as if fighting a deadly duel in the dark. A word more or less might peril his life—a word more or less might be fatal to the happiness of those who were far dearer.

Amid the arduous duties of the post he was now filling, these anxieties incessantly recurred; imbiting the whole peace of his life, and invalidating all his efforts. A curse was upon him! It was in vain he strove to live, and labor, and prosper. The stigma once incurred was ineffaceable.

One day, after a sleepless night, one day when, in a state rather resembling clairvoyance than reverie, produced by the reperusal of his English letters, he had seemed to behold the fair form of Esther—his kinswoman—his cousin—his childhood's companion—struggling in the embraces of a ruffian against whom his poor old father had no longer strength to defend her—he determined, at any risk, at any cost, to visit England and defy the worst. Had not Esther assured him that every trace of that dire event was, by her prudent care, completely removed? And was it likely that the county magistracy, in spite of the length of its ears, would listen to the unsupported testimony of one who had no motive to adduce for the silence by which he had hitherto defeated the ends of justice?

He would hazard the trial. It appeared dastardly to resign to their fate a feeble old man and timid young girl, while he was sunning him securely in the prosperities of life. Having obtained leave of absence from his duties, and publicly announced the necessity of visiting his friends in Europe, Laurence Donovan realized a sufficient sum for the furtherance of his projects, and embarked for his native country.

As he set foot upon the deck of the vessel that was destined to convey Caesar and his fortunes, his heart almost failed him. While still surrounded by a host of leave-taking friends, who were loading him with commissions for England and offers of service during his absence, a still small voice appeared to whisper in his ear—"An eye for an eye—a tooth for a tooth! It is written that 'mischiefs shall hunt the violent man.'"

CHAPTER XIII.

I saw him beat the surges under him,
And ride upon their backs. He trod the water,
Whose enmity he flung aside, and breasted
The surge most swollen that met him; his bold head
'Bove the contentious waves he kept, and oar'd
Himself with his good arms in lassy stroke
To the shore, that o'er his wave-worn basis bow'd,
As stooping to relieve him. It was chance
He came alive to land.

No, no!—He's gone!

SHAKESPEARE.

WINTER was drawing on again. By degrees, the children at the rectory were forced to abandon their ramblings into Warling-wood. The Hams were too damp for their little feet. But there was little to regret in their favorite haunt. The last blackberry was gone. Nothing that took their fancy remained, save the redberries of the orchis, upstarting like polished coral from among the tawny fallen leaves; or the robins, with their breasts of rival redness and gem-like eyes, piping on the naked boughs. But these they heard better and saw as well among the hollies and Portugal laurels of their grandfather's overgrown shrubbery.

In time, even this home-circuit became impossible to the little creatures. The weather set in with boisterous violence. Considerable mischief was done to the new works of Sir Mark Colston, by a series of gales almost amounting to a hurricane; and though the situation of Hartington, twenty miles from the coast, afforded no personal interest in the shipping department, sad rumors crossed the country of numerous wrecks, attended with loss of life.

The state of the weather served to prolong, by a week or so, the hopes and fears of Esther Harman, when the period arrived for the return of the mail which she hoped would bring an answer from New York. But at length she was forced to give up all expectation. The storms lulled again, the winds were favorable, and still no letter! Nothing left for it but to look forward with still more trembling anxiety to the packet of the ensuing month: for at that period, steam navigation had not rendered the vast Atlantic a mere channel. A great gulf still divided the two worlds, and long intervals interrupted the communication. At all events, the delay promised greater certainty that the important letter would have reached its destination and been duly answered.

Little enough was there at Hartington to distract poor Esther's attention from these solitudes. Scarcely one of the old clerk's neighbors but had done their best to be hospitable and kind to his niece. But her troubles were too deep-seated to be accessible to such consolations; and though, in return for their cordialities, she endeavored to give her attention when Jukes the wheelwright and his wife, and a few more, who, in spite of all Sir Mark Colston's activity and beneficence, had never ceased to regret the disappointment of the two mild, gracious young ladies, who, in the time of old Sir Clement, had come among them now and then like a sunshiny day in winter, to brighten the tenor of their dreariness, tried to entertain her with the news they had gathered at the parsonage; how their favorite, Miss Cecilia, was now Lady Fletcher, with a grand castle of her own, in which her mother and sister were staying with her in Ireland; and how the old nurse of Colonel Larpent's beautiful children, still hoped and prayed that, some day or other, the poor little things might be so fortun-

nate as to obtain Miss Sophia for a mother-in-law. But it was difficult to bestow more than a vague smile upon their gossip. To her all this was a matter of no moment. Her heart was absorbed in a destiny thousands of miles distant from Hartington.

But that it was so absorbed, she could scarcely have failed to notice the change which her firmness, or some other motive, had wrought in the conduct of her persecutor at Hartington Hall. Instead of threatening and bullying, as during the early part of her visit to her uncle, Sir Mark Colston was becoming almost gentle, almost subdued. The influence of her serenity was working wonders on his coarse nature. Though seldom neglecting an opportunity of assuring her that his desire was unabated to raise her from her lowly estate to the highest grade in the country round, he no longer intruded into the cottage during the absence of the clerk; and by the deference with which he was beginning to treat that fair young girl, there was some reason to infer that his passion was sobering into affection, and that his protestations were sincere.

For, though he had ceased to importune with visits, he was usually to be found wandering about the neighborhood of the cottage. The little Lar pents scarcely ever returned from their morning walk, without having to tell that they had met "the gentleman what belonged to the great house," in or near Church-lane. He appeared to have deserted his own fine domain, and taken up a post of observation near the Hams. Morning, mid-day, evening, he still haunted the spot. So is it ever with lovers; to whom even the atmosphere breathed by the object of their attachment, has a charm of its own.

No one molested him in his beat. Few besides those prattling children ever approached the cottage to exchange words of greeting with "pretty Esther," or beg for bunches of rosemary to burn in their nursery. The lad employed by the post-office to deliver the letters of the village, came not near it; those of John Downing being left till called for, (by way of precaution,) at the neighboring market-town of F——. Even such a thing as a newspaper never crossed the threshold. At the time the papers were filled with accounts of the famous Hartington murder, John Downing had conceived a horror of these missives of intelligence. Since that day, indeed, he had scarcely cast his eyes on printed paper, save the one volume that gathers new grace from affliction.

One day, it was on the eve of the last Sabbath of the year, as the poor old clerk was conferring with his superior in the vestry, touching a dole of money and distribution of bread to the poor of the parish, which, by the beneficence of Sir Mark Colston had taken place in the church on Christmas day—"By the bye, Downing, I have a letter for you in my pocket," said Mr. Wigswell, "which came by the post this morning, enclosed to 'the rector of Hartington,' with a request that I would inquire whether any person of your name resided in my parish; and if not, to return it to a magistrate of Cornwall, who forwards his address. But I fancy the letter has found its way to the right owner!" continued the rector, on seeing John Downing change color when, after adjusting his spectacles, he proceeded to open it, and glance over its contents.

"It has, sir!" replied the old man, faintly. And, hastily refolding it, he dropped it into his

pocket, as if for future perusal in private; the name of Laurence Donovan having met his eyes in the first few lines of the letter.

In kindness to his emotion, the good rector instantly abbreviated his business of the day; and made some pretext to quit the church, in order that the clerk might proceed to his own home, for the perusal of his strange correspondence.

When he reached the cottage, Esther was fortunately from home. He thought it fortunate at least; well knowing how seldom she quitted the cottage, unless on some errand of benevolence, and little surmising that she had been intercepted in her melancholy ramble to Warling-wood, the first she had ventured for weeks, by the man she most detested upon earth; who, whenever he found his assiduities ill-received, never failed to inquire, by way of vengeance, whether "she was as fond as ever of digging for lily roots at right angles with the great alder-tree of the Hams?"

Relieved by her absence, the old man hastily bolted the door of the cottage, drew his arm-chair towards the casement, carefully wiped his spectacles in preparation; then, after once or twice laying down the letter upon his knee, as if more afraid than eager to master its contents, he cast his eyes once more upon that unknown handwriting.

The signature was new to him. But the writer considerably commenced his communication with, "Though a personal stranger to you, I am under the necessity of addressing you, in discharge of a duty distressing to me, and likely to inflict far severer pain on yourself. As a minister of the gospel, sir, I pray that God's grace may be with you when you peruse these lines, which come to acquaint you that your son, Laurence Donovan, is no more."

It was enough. John Downing neither shed a tear nor moaned a moan. Laying down the letter upon his knee, he closed his old eyes for a few minutes, as in the act of mental devotion.

Strengthened by that secret communing with the Dispenser of his destinies, he took courage to read on. It would be some solace to learn that the son in whom his soul delighted had died a death of peace—an honorable death. Knowing nothing of the warning despatched to him by Esther, he believed him to have departed this life at New York.

"I can understand," resumed the writer of the letter, "that the blow will fall the heavier upon you at a moment when you were hourly expecting the arrival in England of your unfortunate son. But such was the decree of the Almighty, and His will be done!"

"The details are as follows:—

"On the 17th of last month, during the hurricane which visited the whole of the Western coast, several vessels were lost off that portion belonging to my parish. No less than nine lives were sacrificed; among them, four persons belonging to the Kestrel mail-packet from New York, in which your son was a passenger. The wreck of this unfortunate vessel was attended with the most afflicting circumstances; for it occurred in open day, under a state of weather that rendered assistance impossible. An attempt was made to put out the life-boat, but without success. In such a sea as was running against one of the most dangerous points of our perilous coast, no boat could live; and at 3 P. M., the ship went to pieces. Two mariners saved themselves

by floating upon spars. Another of the crew was seen making the most courageous endeavors to attain the shore by swimming. But, alas! within half a furlong of the beach, we lost sight of him in the surf; and a bruised and bleeding body was all that reached land.

"I was present, sir, at this heart-rending scene; and can attest that no means were left untried to restore animation, though without even a hope of success. I also officiated at the interment of your son, in my own churchyard, with all the decency becoming his situation in life; for the body was instantly recognized by one of the sailors whose life was spared on this sad occasion, as that of Mr. Laurence Donovan, a respectable merchant of New York, and passenger on board the Kestrel.

"Guided by this information, I despatched a letter to the United States by return of mail, to the address supplied me, to apprise the family or friends of the deceased of his unfortunate end. I also advertised in *The Times* newspaper that a trunk had been washed on shore, bearing his name engraved on a brass plate; and requested any friends Mr. Donovan might have in England to come forward and claim it.

"The customary time having expired without notice being taken of this advertisement, it appeared necessary to break open the trunk, for farther information concerning the owner; in order that, in the settlement of its annual accounts, the parish might be reimbursed for the cost of a funeral suitable with the fortune of a man in independent circumstances.

"The first thing, sir, that presented itself in a letter-case contained in the trunk, was a paper inscribed, 'My Will'; which, being broken open yesterday by myself, as a county magistrate, in presence of an attorney-at-law, proved to be signed 'Luke Downing, alias Laurence Donovan.' The instrument in question purports to bequeath the entire property of the testator in the United States, to his father John Downing of Hartington, in the county of Sussex, with other legacies and instructions on which I need not now insist. But I lose no time in profiting by the information thus afforded, to address you for the purpose of disclosing the severe family misfortune, of which, by some unaccountable circumstance, you appear to be still ignorant.

"It only remains for me to add, that the personal property of your deceased son is now in my custody; and will be given up to you, after the usual forms for the establishment of your right and title to the same. On return of an answer to this letter, the Will shall be forwarded through the hands of the Rev. Edward Wigswell, by

"Your obedient servant,

"JOSEPH TREMOYLAN.

"Rector of St. Carron's."

The old man read through the letter a second time, from first to last, before it produced any clear impression on his mind. Comparatively illiterate, and having vegetated through life without stirring further from Hartington than once in his days to the county town, he could not readily bring home to himself the possibility that the son he believed to be alive and well in America, should be lying in English earth. There must be some mistake. It could not be his Laurence Donovan. It could not be his idolized Luke. It could not be the child consigned to him by his poor wife upon her death-

bed, who had died so terrible a death. A happy doubt, but for which, perhaps, the shock of that dire intelligence might have proved fatal; for when by degrees the reality and certainty of his son's identity with the shipwrecked stranger dawned upon his mind, his faculties seemed one by one to forsake him.

He sat, as if transfixed to stone; *trying* to think, *trying* to feel; but thought and sensibility escaping him as the waters of a stream through our vainly clasping hands. He could not bring the past before him, he could not bring the present, he could not bring the future, so as to be cognizant, to its full extent, of the loss he had undergone. By degrees, the passion of his grief became as that of the distracted Lear. Terrible smiles convulsed his rough features, as, like the persecuted king, he exclaimed, "O fool! I shall go mad."

But though reason was tottering on her throne, there was sense enough remaining to instigate a fearful resolution. He felt conscious of his infirmity; conscious that the power to will and to do might soon be denied him. He had been tried to the uttermost. Nothing was left for him to suffer. He was entitled to his release. But, in order to die in peace, a heavy load must be removed from his mind.

With this impression strong upon him, he arose, (as David when he shook off the ashes of his affliction, after the death of his child,) and girded up his loins and stood erect upon the earth. Before the return of Esther, pale and dispirited, from her walk, he had laid by the fatal letter in fast keeping. He could not bear to disturb her tranquillity by knowledge of its contents. The sight of her sorrow would be harder to bear than his own; and were he now to unnerve himself, he might perhaps go down to the grave unrelieved of his burthen.

Had Esther returned from her walk in cheerful spirits, the shock of seeing her smile at a moment when the last prop had been removed from her feeble destinies, would probably have excited such a struggle in her uncle's mind as to elicit the truth. But the poor girl entered the cottage with her eyes seared and bloodshot with weeping; and when she flung aside her bonnet with a petulance how different from her usual placid deportment, the dishevelled hair fell in long tresses from beneath, as though disturbed by previous disarrangement. Her breathing was still impeded as by some ill-repressed emotion.

While the old man stood staring upon her in stupefied silence, she snatched a cup of water to her lips, and drank as if to restore her courage, rather than allay her thirst.

"Uncle!" faltered she, before he could sufficiently recover himself to address her, "*dear* uncle, you must not take it unkindly of me if—" But, having reached thus far, she stopped short, and burst into tears.

"Would that I were dead!" continued she, in a paroxysm of grief, in answer to the questions and caresses with which the heartbroken old man endeavored to soothe her. "I have never done harm or harshness to living soul," faltered she, while her hand trembled in the rough clasp of his, "yet every one and every thing combine against me. I ought to have a home at Norcroft; but the cruelty of my brothers rendered it impossible to abide therein. I ought to have a refuge with one who is far away; but the persecutions of an enemy prevent my reaching his arms. Even here, uncle, where your affection affords me shelter, even here

am I hunted even unto death by a wretch whom I abhor as befits the plighted wife of Luke and your adopted child. I hate him, uncle—I hate him—I hate him!" reiterated the poor girl, with almost maniacal violence; "and if you knew how he besets and follows me, and mixes up his loathsome courtship with dreadful threatenings concerning you and my poor cousin, you would hate and despise him as I do."

John Downing replied by pressing her hand caressingly to the burning lids that were closed over his throbbing eyeballs.

"And so, uncle, as I said before, you must not take it amiss if I quit Hartington, and try to get my living in some honest service, out of reach of Sir Mark Colston."

"What has he done to thee, child, to put thee so beside thyself?" demanded her uncle, in a voice so hoarse that, though she saw his lips move, she could scarcely believe it to be his own.

"For the last month," said Esther, "never have I stirred from the house, but he was on the watch to follow me; so that comfort myself by a walk on the Hams, I dared not. For *there*, we should have been alone, and without a check upon his presuming words or actions. Often, therefore, have I been forced into the village when all I wanted was quiet and solitude. And still, even there, he followed me; and if I stopped to exchange a word with a neighbor in answer to inquiries after your health, *there* was he, to play the spy upon me; every one thinking me mightily honored to be courted by one of his fortune, and I, all the while, shuddering to be even accosted by one of his nature!"

"They do not know him, Esther, as we do," pleaded the old man, in extenuation of his neighbors.

"But to-day, uncle, this afternoon—I could not, somehow or other, resist my wish to visit Warlingwood. When I am walking *there*, it seems as if Luke were by my side."

Involuntarily poor Downing dropped her hand, and clasped his own over his aching temples.

"And so," she continued, "having looked about me to be secure that Sir Mark was not at hand, that no one was following me—I stole along the Hams, as though for some blameful action. And the stream being swollen and rushing along over the gravel, I could not, for its noise, hear footsteps behind me, till I felt an arm round my waist, and turning short round, found myself face to face with that man—that fiend."

"That ruffian!" muttered the indignant clerk.

"You may guess whether I told him what was passing in my mind! For my whole heart was on my lips. It seemed indeed, at that moment, as though he had suddenly lost all power of injuring Luke, or thwarting *us*; and as if by the will of God, my very tongue was loosed!"

Poor Downing shuddered as he listened. Was she already apprized of the loss that had befallen them.

"On which, uncle," continued Esther, "he too gave way to his passion; and while he insisted on knowing whether some letter or other had not reached the cottage, to encourage me to show myself such a termagant, he stamped on the ground for rage, and gripped my arms till the blood started. A hard matter had I to withdraw myself from him and flee hither out of his way; satisfied that he would not follow me across the threshold. But again I beseech you, uncle, do not reproach me if

I hasten to take shelter where he can no longer molest me!"

"It shall not need, my poor child!" said poor Downing, gravely interrupting her. "It shall not need. He has done thee the last ill turn, Esther he will do thee in this world."

Then, seeing that the solemnity of his manner overawed the poor girl, he kissed her affectionately on the forehead; and in a voice which he strove to render as his usual voice, bade her hasten to sup and retire to rest; for that he had much summing up of parish accounts for the close of the year, and wanted quietness for the task.

"I must set my house in order," said he, with a grim smile, after having barred the door and shutters, while Esther was trimming up the hearth as for a long watch. "But take no further thought for thine enemy, Esther. He hath bruised our head: we shall yet bruise his heel."

CHAPTER XIV.

All is gone—save a Voice
That never did yet rejoice.

'Tis sweet and low—'tis sad and lone—
And biddeth us love the thing that's flown.

BARRY CORNWALL.

The morning dawned chilly and stragglingly. Heavy mists came drifting across even the feeble light of that winter's day. The atmosphere was bitter. The same gusts that drove the clouds across the dreary sky, beat at intervals against the casement of John Downing's cottage, like volleys of rain. The very earth seemed colder than usual under foot. He felt it so at least. For it was the first day he had waked to the recollection that it covered the heads of all who had been dear to him in this world.

He arrayed himself, however, steadily in his Sunday suit, his appropriate suit of black; and by degrees, as the dimness dispersed from his mind, occasioned by the few hours of unnatural sleep in which, after watching through the night for the arrangement of his worldly concerns, he had been so fortunate as to lose all recollection of his sufferings; instead of becoming more sensitive to the blow that had fallen on him and the trials that still awaited him, the old man grew more and more composed. He was nearer to God. Nothing now interposed between him and his salvation. Time was growing shorter and shorter: so short, that all the ills it could bring, all the humiliations it could inflict, were as a speck of sand compared with those boundless shores of eternity on which he was about to anchor.

By the time John Downing had placed his hand a moment in that of his niece, and thanked her for her care of his morning meal, he was nearly as well prepared to fulfil his duties of the day, as on any other Sabbath of the year.

The state of the weather forbade all loitering by the way. No person met him as he walked slowly up the lane, leaving Esther to close the house and follow him to morning service; so that there was nothing to disturb the pious penitence in which he mentally reproached himself with his former abject dread of the revilement of his neighbors. But if he had dared to put the love and approbation of this world in competition with the approval of his own conscience,—his conscience, the whispered voice of his Maker,—heavy had been his punishment, even in this world.

It was remembered afterwards, by one of old Jukes' grandchildren, who was idling near the porch, that John Downing, instead of crossing the churchyard, angle-wise, as had been his wont ever since the head of his son Jack was laid with that of his faithful wife, as if expressly to avoid the spot, went calmly towards it, and stood for a moment with uplifted eyes beside the green mound. Perhaps the old man conceived that in his prayer to Heaven to "forgive him his trespasses," he could not be near enough to those through whose sufferings it had been appointed him to suffer; or perhaps he might be thinking how soon the feet of the living would tread over his weary frame, under that withered sod.

When he crossed the porch, the sexton was tolling in, and the church three parts full. All the usual congregation of Hartington was assembled—save a few of the very old, and very suffering unable to confront the boisterous inclemency of the weather. But the rough breezes caused the warm blood of the young only to circulate the more freely.

Christmas is a cheering time in country life; a time when the bounties of the rich are dispensed to the poor in compensation of the niggardliness of nature; a time when the joyous are more glad, and even the sorrowful attempt to be joyous; and the country folks came plodding in to their devotions, by two and three, with faces brightened by exercise, and spirits lightened by the prospect of communion with that great Being in whose sight all men are brethren.

The elder of the little Larpents was sitting with a demure face beside the knee of its proud grandmother, waiting for the shuffling of feet and clapping to of doors to subside, ere the service began. In the old chancel-pew facing the pulpit, stood Sir Mark Colston, resting with one hand on the carved oaken knob which terminated its antique cornice, (the curtains of green serge behind which poor old Sir Clement used to screen his humble devotions, having been removed as unsightly;) the other being fast clenched by his side, as he watched the quiet entrance of Esther Harman, taking her slow and downcast way to a bench under the reading desk, her customary seat.

Since their interview of the preceding evening, he had scarcely ceased from secret execrations against that unhappy girl. For, half-maddened by his insolent brutality, she had spoken out;—all her loathing—all her contempt—all her desire that his persecution of the unfortunate Luke and his family, might be repaid fourfold on his own head. The desire of vengeance against her was rankling in the dark depths of his heart; and but that they were assembled together in the house of God, his wrath had not even then been suspended.

The service began. The venerable rector, whose bleared eyes and tremulous voice might perhaps have been objects of sarcasm or pity in a strange place, possessed the ear, heart and confidence of a parish to which he was endeared by a ministry of half a century; during which not an unjust action or grasping proceeding, could be laid to his charge. He had preached the doctrines of Christ in integrity, simplicity, and peace; and stranger still, had practised what he preached. They listened therefore to his words with twice the deference they would have shown to a younger, more eloquent, but perhaps less well-affectioned man.

Touched as the aged are apt to be by associations

connected with the closing of another year, his voice was more tremulous than usual. That of his poor clerk, on the contrary, was firm in giving out the responses; and if the face of John Downing was deathly white, so white that it was difficult to discern where the hoary hair was scattered on his wan temples, such of his neighbors as noticed the change in his appearance, attributed it to the nipping influence of the weather. For at threescore years and ten, the first frosts of the year search out the very marrow of the bones.

It was afterwards recalled to mind by the good pastor, that, on retiring into the vestry at the close of morning prayer, he found the decanter of spring-water provided for him there summer and winter, in service time, drained nearly dry; and as not a drop of it had moistened his own lips, he knew that, after assisting him with his gown previous to the communion service, the poor clerk must have had recourse to it, to refresh his parched lips for the terrible act of expiation he was about to perform. For, lo! when every eye was bent upon the venerable clerk, to hear him give out from the reading desk the second psalm; to the stupefaction of all present, John Downing uplifted his voice, beseeching pardon and indulgence for the scandal he was about to occasion; and entreating them "to look upon him as a sinner about to render an account to God of the wickedness he had committed, who was desirous first to clear his conscience by making atonement in this world; humbling himself in the sight of those by whom he was unduly respected, and redressing a great wrong, in which he had connived."

But that he spoke so calmly as well as so fervently, many of the congregation would have apprehended that a sudden fit of insanity had attacked the poor old clerk. But the affecting mildness of his voice and sadness of his aspect, pleaded in his favor. No one whispered that his reason was troubled. No one ventured to interrupt him. All sat aghast; the sympathy of the many being with one so long known, so severely tried, so generally regarded.

"May it please the Almighty, by whom I have been so sorely visited," continued the old man, "so to prosper my confession that it may prove a warning to others, when, tempted like me, like me they are about to fall!"

At that moment, Sir Mark Colston, who had glided from his pew during the murmur that succeeded the opening of Downing's address, perceived on reaching the church doors that, previous to the communion service, they had been carefully closed and locked. Nothing remained for him therefore but to slink back to his place; or conceal himself in the shadow of the porch, like an infected sheep of the flock. But attention had been already drawn towards him by his movement; and putting his usual bold face upon the matter, he stalked back into his pew.

"By my connivance," continued the clerk, before he had reached his place, "the registers of this parish were mutilated to favor the claims of an impostor. Nay, unbeknown to me, though by reason of my carelessness, a forged key was provided by the man calling himself Sir Mark Colston; in order that the coffins of the Colston family might be attainable, and by reason of a false plate affixed to one of them, an unjust claim be established. In proof of the truth of my words, let the vault be opened. When the coffins are verified by the burial certificates, that of Sir Robert Colston, who

died in 1714, will be found wanting; and the coffin bearing the name of Elinor, the wife of Mark Colston, will be found to contain the body of a man."

At this assertion, an irrepressible outcry and confusion arose in the church, under cover of which, the so-called Sir Mark Colston made his way into the vestry, from whence the infirm old pastor was preparing to emerge, supposing that the psalm was concluding, and wholly unconscious of what was passing.

But to render Mr. Wigswell cognizant of what was going on, was no such easy matter. Exceeding deafness rendered the murmurs and ejaculations of the congregation inaudible to him; and on being hurried forward into the church by the irate object of Downing's denunciations, to oppose his authority against further violation of the sanctity of the place, the first word that reached him was the stern and firm asseveration of the clerk that the man beside him was a rogue and impostor, and the daughters of the late Colonel Colston, the rightful heirs of the late baronet, his friend!

"My brethren—restrain your feelings! There must be an end of this. The house of God is no place for so indecent a discussion," faltered Mr. Wigswell from the pulpit, into which he had hastily ascended for the resumption of his authority, if not for the discharge of his functions. But the clamor of the congregation prevented his faint voice from being audible. Even that of the infuriated impostor was heard with difficulty when, raging like a tiger at bay, he proclaimed that the man to whose slanders they were giving ear was unworthy of credit, having himself connived with his younger son in the murder of his elder brother.

By a strange revulsion of feeling, the horror produced by this accusation, reduced to silence the frantic outcries provoked by Downing's confessions. On a sudden, the tempest was still. A pin might have been heard to drop in the church. But in the midst arose once more the old man's voice, calm, sad, but unsubdued.

"I was prepared for this act of vengeance," said he, "and am content, my brethren, to appeal to your own hearts whether so foul a crime be possible even among the worst of human beings. My poor Luke is before the judgment-seat of God; who knows that the stain of blood might be on his hand, but never that of blood-guiltiness on his soul. I, too, am going to my account; and with the grave opening before me, am resolved to stand no longer before my neighbors in the light of an honest and upright man, when the confession of my fault may prove the means of restoring the injured to their rights."

Further recrimination would probably have been elicited from Mark Colston, and further remonstrances from the rector, but that the greater part of the congregation were now crowding round the insensible form of poor Esther; who, on hearing the sudden and terrible announcement of her bereavement, had fallen prostrate on the pavement. When raised from the ground, her deathlike paleness and total insensibility created a belief among the persons nearest to her that she had been killed by the fall.

Happy had it been so! for what was to be her portion now? When conveyed back with difficulty to the cottage, and medical aid at length procured and a vein opened, better for her peace of mind that she had remained unconscious of what was passing around her. For the rigor of the law had seized upon her poor old uncle. For public example's sake, he had been given into custody by the rector;

perhaps, to afford grounds for the detention of Sir Mark Colston, till the arrival of Colonel Garrett, for whom an express was hastily despatched.

"Tell him that he must hasten, or it will be too late!" said Downing, on learning that his deposition must be taken down before a magistrate. "The bowl is broken at the cistern—the cords are loosed. My life is as a tale that is told."

Though shocked and grieved that on the Sabbath day there should be an uproar among the people, Mr. Wigswell, aware that from the absence of the Colstons in Ireland, the care of their interests was in his hands, hastened also to obtain the intervention of their country solicitor; and before night, after due examination of the parties, Colonel Garrett, by the advice of Mr. Aldridge, had signed a warrant by which Mark Essenden Colston, commonly called Sir Mark Colston, stood committed to the county gaol for sacrilege. The more urgent point of his misdemeanors was such it was difficult to place within the reach of criminal law.

Against John Downing, the accusation was of a nature to entitle the magistrate to accept bail; which was instantly offered by Jukes the wheelwright and one of the substantial farmers of Hartington.

"Thanks, my old friends and neighbors!" faltered the old man, who needed no learned leech to tell him that the shock he had received was beginning to suspend the vital current in his frame. "My torment is not for long. But I would fain give up the ghost under my own roof, with my head upon my own pillow. When I am gone, be kind to the poor girl."

With the aid of Aldridge, he lost no time in bequeathing to his unfortunate niece, the handsome independence to which he had become entitled as heir-at-law to his son. But when, three days afterwards, his prediction was verified by a peaceful departure from this life, a deathbed cheered by the act of atonement, which by the grace of God he had been enabled to fulfil, and the certainty that he was about to be reunited to all he had loved on earth in that better land "where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest"—Esther, who, even in her brokenheartedness, found strength to minister to his last moments and close his careworn eyes, heard, without so much as surprise, that she was now as rich as she was lovely. For her, joy, grief, or wonder, were at an end. All—all was a blank. She had loved and lived in vain.

When, in process of time, the hiatus in the parish register was admitted to proof, and the necessity of violating the sacred abode of the dead (by opening the Colston coffins) forestalled by an ample confession on the part of the daring impostor, who trusted to purchase, by these means, the mercy of the family concerning the restitution of the sums appropriated to his use; the first act of Sophia Colston and her sister, after the legal recognition of their rights as co-heiresses at law to the late Sir Clement, was to offer an asylum at the Hall to the poor bereaved girl, the history of whose troubles was so singularly intermingled with their own.

It was an act of womanly mercy on the part of those, the native goodness of whose hearts was still further improved by a short but painful probation. But that probation was already at an end. Scarcely was the venerable head of the old clerk laid in the grave beside his ill-fated wife and son, when, summoned by her solicitors from Ireland to Hartington hall, Miss Colston's first interview with Aldridge placed in her possession the letter forwarded by

Colonel Larpent from Lausanne; in which he implored him to sift to the utmost the character and conduct of the pretended Sir Mark Colston—"since he was likely to have in his keeping the happiness of the most beloved of women, yes—still the *most* beloved—though the persuasions of her friends had induced her to dismiss him from her regard, in order to reconsolidate the worldly interests of the family."

Miss Colston was consequently now as happy as Cecilia. Sir Henry Fletcher, indeed, persisted in protesting the contrary;—"being," (as he said,) "bound to believe all that was asserted by his darling little wife, who declared *herself* to be the happiest woman in the world."

In how short a time afterwards Colonel Larpent arrived in England, on the summons of a generous letter from Sophia, explaining away the miserable misunderstanding that had arisen between them, it is unnecessary to inquire. But from the day of his appearance at Hartington, even Sir Henry was forced to admit that "honors were divided." And he was content to give up his share, as he never failed to add, "since Larpent, to whom he had always been sincerely attached, had, after all, turned up a trump."

The wedding was solemnized with a degree of joy, which, unlike the joy usually attendant on weddings, had not a drawback. The worthless man in whose veins some drops of Colston blood was flowing, was luckily expiating by a few months' imprisonment in the county gaol, the act of sacrilege committed in Hartington church; and by a generous provision made for him by the heiresses, on condition of his settling for life in the colonies and following up his profession under the name of his mother, all future difficulties were removed, and the necessity for legal proceedings superseded.

Well was it for Colonel Larpent and his children that the untimely fate of the unfortunate Luke Donovan brought their perplexities to so early a crisis. For the good old rector was not long in following to the grave the faithful old friend with whom he had crept through life, and the faithful servant by whose diligent ministry his own had been lightened. The shock of so many startling events probably accelerated his end; for within six months of the decease of John Downing, a new rector ascended the pulpit in Hartington church.

It was no small comfort to the widow, on her final removal from the rectory, to know that her grandchildren were safe in their happy home at the Hall; a home where she was at all times welcome, and cheered by the congenial society of the worthy mother of the new Mrs. Larpent.

Of the present flourishing state of Hartington, let the reader, if possible, go and judge for himself. He will find it one of the most thriving and beautiful of those charming villages, of which Sussex is so justly proud; and the improvements effected under the new dynasty are not, like those commenced by the villanous Sir Mark, intended to propitiate the ill opinion of the world and disfavor of the parish, but matters of conscientious discretion.

Among the changes, however, which attract the eye of the traveller, is *one* for which Hartington is *not* indebted to the generosity of the lady of the manor. On the church lands, sloping towards the stream, stand a row of neat almshouses, endowed for the use of twelve aged persons of the parish; each having its little garden, and wearing the air of neatness and cheerfulness, peculiar to the charitable institutions of modern times. The foundation

bears the name of Downing. But it was executed by a pious and humble individual, interred in Hartington churchyard, fast by the graves of the Downing family; but, by her own desire, without so much as a headstone to mark the spot.

The two Harnans, who are still alive, (and still brutal,) did their utmost to invalidate the will by which their poor sister created this endowment, on pretence that, since her misfortunes, she had become infirm of intellect. But Aldridge, by whom the document was drawn out, had made all fast; and the whole village united in hailing the day when,

with the consent of the ecclesiastical courts, the ill-fated cottage of the Downings was thrown down, that the foundations of the new charity might be laid on the spot.

On the day of the inauguration of poor Esther's pensioners, Hartington green was deserted. The whole population thronged to the Hams; admitting that the blot upon their village archives was thoroughly effaced; old and young uniting in a prayer that the Almighty would pity the Temptation of the old man whose gray hairs were in the grave, and accept the proffered ATONEMENT.

THE MOLE AND ITS ENCAMPMENT.

If we had a spade I would lay bare its little habitation, and show such a wonderful encampment as you have rarely witnessed: chambers, and galleries, and long, winding passages, which lead in all directions, and, when opened, look not unlike the old puzzle which is called "The Plan of Troy." The earth, as you may tell by placing your foot upon it, is very strong and solid, for it has been well pressed and well beaten by the mole while making it. At the bottom of this hillock there is a gallery, almost as round as a ring, and there is a smaller one also above it, of the same form; and, to get from one gallery to the other, it has made itself five passages, which go upwards. Is not that something like a house, think you, with five staircases which lead to the upper story! It has also a chamber lower down than the lowest gallery which I have described; and there is also another hole at the bottom of the chamber, which, after, running down for a few inches, rises up again, and opens into a passage or high road, if we may so call it, of the encampment. But when in this passage it can turn back again and enter the circular gallery at the bottom, which I have before described, and take its choice of any of the nine streets which branch out from this lower passage.

You might wonder for what purpose it wanted such a number of roads and galleries, looking so many different ways; but when I tell you that this is its chase, or forest, or hunting-ground, and that it ranges here and there, up this passage and down that, searching for earth-worms and insects, you will see at once the use of these numerous avenues, and the chance it has of obtaining larger quantities of food through having such extensive grounds to range in. But there is a larger run, which naturalists call the high road, and along this he passes many times in the course of the day to visit his several hunting-grounds, which branch out every way; and I can tell you necessity causes the moles to be very polite to each other, for only one at a time can pass along this common high road, which seems to belong to the whole community of moles; so that, if two chance to meet, one is compelled to retire into one of the side passages until the other passes; and sometimes this causes a fight, and then, of course, the weakest goes to the wall. But, although they thus quarrel about the possession of the road, each seems to pay great respect to his neighbor's enclosure, one never taking possession of the hunting-ground another has made. It is in this common highway where the molecatchers place the traps, as they know he has to pass it many times in the course of the day to see what game there is in his preserve. You must not always expect to find its nest under a molehill, for it is oftener placed at the end of three or four pas-

sages, at some distance from the encampment, when, if you are fortunate enough to light upon the right spot, you may sometimes dig out four or five young ones in summer. It is a thirsty animal, requiring much drink, and the high road, which I have mentioned as being used by the whole community, is sure to lead to a common run, which opens out near some ditch or pond; but when water is far distant they will sink a well of their own, and dig downward and downward until they come to water. In pursuing a worm it will sometimes follow it to the surface of the earth, devour it, and return back again into its burrow. It always looks fat, and has a sharp tapering nose, well adapted for turning up the earth; its eyes are very small. The fur is soft as silk, and bright as velvet; its color is a deep black; its feet are furnished with sharp nails, with which it scoops and digs away the earth, throwing the loosened dirt behind as it progresses with its work, and which it afterwards carries up and forms into those hillocks which we so commonly see. In winter, when the earth is frozen hard, and its hunting-ground is cold and useless, and produces no food, it will dig a deep hole straight down, in order to reach the worms that have taken shelter there from the cold. You little dreamed that such a curious animal, and such a wonderful structure, were to be found under this little hillock, which to look upon, saving for the few wild flowers which cover it, appears an object of no interest.—*The Boy's Summer Book.*

ILLNESS OF THE POET MOORE.—We have received from London a private letter, dated Thursday, from which, with much regret, we give the following paragraph:—"I lament to have to tell you of the rapidly declining health of Ireland's most honored poet. The sun of life is fast setting, and it is feared that his dissolution is near at hand."—*Ballinasloe Star.*

JEWS IN GERMANY.—A letter from Posen, dated the 17th October, mentions that an association formed in that place, under the patronage of the King of Prussia, for establishing Jewish colonies, has purchased land to the value of 25,000*l.* The number of Jews who have demanded permission to be received is about 3,300; several of whom have some funds of their own.

PRIVATE LETTERS FROM VIENNA leave no doubt that the Due de Bordeaux was married, on the 5th instant, to the Princess Maria Theresa Beatrice, sister to the reigning Duke of Modena. The princess numbers among her charms 300,000,000 francs, or twelve millions sterling! It is rumored that the Duke of Modena's second sister is betrothed to the second son of Don Carlos. The Duke of Modena is the only sovereign of Europe who has not deigned to recognize "the dynasty of July"—Louis Philippe.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

AND now is Snipeton widowed. Yes; with a living wife, damned to worst widowhood. It would have worn and tortured the spirit within him sometimes to wander from the desk to the churchyard, and there look down upon Clarissa's grave. To have read, and read with dreamy, vacant eyes, the few ombstone syllables that sum up—solemnly brief—the hopes, and fears, and wrongs, and wretchedness; the pleasant thoughts and aching weariness that breath begins and ends. "Clarissa, wife of Ebenezer Snipeton, died —." Words to dim a husband's eyes; to carry heaviness to the heart; to numb the soul; and for a time to make the lone man, with his foot at the treasure-holding grave, feel the whole world drifted from him, and he left landed on the little spot he looks on. And then breaks small, mournful music from those words; pleasant, hopeful sounds, that will mingle her name with his; that will make him own the dear, the still incorporate dead. The flesh of his flesh, the bone of his bone, is lapsed into the disgrace of death; it is becoming the nourishment of grass: and still his heart yearns to the changing form; still it is a part of him; and his tender thoughts may, with the coffined dead, love to renew the bridal vow the dead absolves him of. And Snipeton, his wife in her winding-sheet, might so have solemnized a second wedlock. For surely there are such nuptials. Yes; second marriages of the grave between the quick and the dead, with God and his angels the sole witnesses.

And Snipeton was denied such consolation. His widowhood permitted no such second troth. Living to the world, his wife was dead to him; yet though dead, not severed.—There was the horror; there, the foul condition of disgraced wedlock; the flesh was still of his flesh, cancerous, ulcerous; with a life in it to torture him. By day, that flesh of his flesh would wear him; by night, with time and darkness lying like a weight upon him, would be to him as a fiend that would cling to him; that would touch his lips; that would murmur in his ear. And let him writhe, and struggle, and with a strong man's strong will determine to put away that close tormentor, it would not be. The flesh was still of his flesh, alike incorporate in guilt and truth.

But Snipeton is still a happy man. As yet he knows not of his misery; dreams not of the desolation that, in an hour or so, shall blast him at his threshold. He is still at his desk; happy in his day-dream; his imagination running over, as in wayward moments of half-thrift, half-idleness, it was wont to do, upon the paper on his desk before him.—Imagination, complete and circling; and making that dim sanctuary of dirty Plutus a glistening palace! The pen—the ragged stump, that in his hand had worked as surely as Italian steel, striking through a heart or so, but drawing no blood—the pen, as it had been plucked from the winged heel of the thief's god, Mercury, worked strange sorcery; erept and scratched about the paper, conjuring glories there, that made the old man sternly smile; even as an enchanter smiles at the instant handiwork of all obedient fiends. Reader, look upon the magic that, cunningly exercised by the Snipetons of the world, fills it with beauty; behold the jottings of the black art that, simple as they look, hold, like the knotted ropes of Lapland witches, a power invincible. Here they are; faithfully copied from that piece of paper; the tab-

let of old Snipeton's dearest thoughts, divinest aspirations:—

"£70,000"—"£85,700"—"£90,000"—
"£100,000"—"£150,000"—"£1,000,000!"

In this way did Snipeton—in pleasant, thrifty idleness—pour out his heart; dallying with hope, and giving to the unuttered wish a certain sum in black and white; running up the figures as a rapturous singer climbs the gamut, touching the highest heaven of music to his own delight, and the wonder of the applauding world.

In this manner would Snipeton take pastime with his spirit. In this manner was the paper on his desk writ and over-writ with promised sums that, it was his hope, his day-dream, would surely some day bless him. And the numerals ever rose with his spirits. When very dumpish—with the world going all wrong with him—he would write himself down a pauper; in bitterness of heart loving to enlarge upon his beggary, as thus: 000,000,000,000. But to-day he had ridden with Clarissa; she had looked so lovely and so loving; he was so reassured of her affection; could promise to himself such honeyed days and nights that, dreaming over this; smiling at her flushed face; and with half-closed eyes, and curving mouth, gazing in fancy at her dancing plume—he somehow took the pen between his fingers, and made himself a paradise out of arithmetic.—Thus he laid out his garden of Eden, circling it with rivers of running gold! How the paradise smiled upon paper! How the trees, clustered with ruddy bearing, rose up; how odorously the flowers—and what a breath of immortality came fluttering to his cheek! Snipeton had written—

"£1,000,000;"

and then he sank gently back in his chair, and softly drew his breath as he looked upon what should be his, foreshadowed by his hopes.

Now, at the very moment—yes, by Satan's best chronometer—at the very moment, Clarissa was lifted from her horse, placed in a carriage, and whirled away from home and husband. And he saw not her face of terror—heard not her shriek for help. How could he? Good man! was he not in paradise? Let us not break in upon him. No; for a while, blind and innocent, we will leave him there.

The reader may remember that Mr. Capstick was threatened with an ignominious dismissal from the British senate, as having, it was alleged, bought an honor that, like chastity, is too precious to be sold. The misanthropic member for Liqueurish, in his deep contempt of all human dealings, took little heed of the petition against him; whilst Tangle called it an ugly business, as though in truth he secretly rejoiced in such uncomeliness. Snipeton, too, looked grave; and then, as taking heart from the depth of his pocket, said he would "fight the young profligate to his last guinea;" (and when the weapons are gold, how bloody oft the battle!) Whereupon Capstick relented a little in his savage thoughts; believing that pure patriotism did exist in human nature, and had one dwelling-place at least in the heart of Mr. Snipeton.

"Turn you out of parliament, sir; they might chuck you out o' the window, sir, for what he'd care, if it warn't for his spite. I've told you that all along, and you won't see it," said Bright Jem.

"I am sorry, Jem, that in your declining years for there's no disguising it, James—you're getting

old and earthy—cracking like dry clay, Jem,” said Capstick.

“I don’t want to hide the cracks,” answered Jem; “why should I! No; I’m not afraid to look time in the face, and tell him to do his worst. He never could spile much, that’s one comfort.”

“I am sorry, nevertheless, that you have not a little charity. If I don’t think well of anybody myself, that’s no reason you should n’t; on the contrary, it is slightly an impertinence in you to interfere with what I’ve been used to consider my own privilege.” Thus, with dignity, spoke Capstick.

“All I know is this—and I’m sure of it—if Mrs. Snipeton had as big a wart upon her nose as her husband, you’d never have been member for Liquorish,” said Jem, with new emphasis.

“Really, Mr. Aniseed”—for Capstick became very lofty indeed—“I cannot perceive how Mrs. Snipeton’s wart—that is, if she’d had one—could in any way interfere with my seat in parliament.”

“In this manner,” said Jem; laying one hand flat upon the other. “In this manner. If she’d had a wart upon her nose, young St. James, when he went to borrow money of her husband, would have behaved himself like a honest young gentleman; would n’t have written letters, and tried to send presents, and so forth, till old Snipeton—poor old fellow! for though he was a fool to marry such a young beauty, there’s no knowing how any on us may be tempted.”

“You and I are safe, I think, James!” said Capstick, with a smile.

“I think so; but don’t let’s be presumptuous. However, that’s no reason we should n’t pity the unfortunate,” said Jem. “Well, old Snipeton would n’t have been forced to send his young wife into the country, where his young lordship went after her—I’ve heard all about it. And then Snipeton would n’t ha’ been jealous of the young gentleman, and then you’d have been at the Tub, happy with the pigs and the geese, as if they was your own flesh and blood; and you’d still ha’ been an independent country gentleman, walking about in your own garden, and talking, as you used to do, to your own trees and flowers, that minded you—I’m bound for it—more than anybody in the house o’ parliament will do.”

“Don’t you be too sure of that, Mr. Aniseed. When the minister hears my speech”—

“Well, I only hope my dream of last night won’t come true. I dreamt you’d made your speech, and as soon as you’d made it, I thought you was changed into a garden roller, and the minister, as you call him, did nothing but turn you round and round. Howsomever, that’s nothing to do with what I was saying—saving your presence, I don’t like you to be made a tool on.”

“A tool, Mr. Aniseed! A tool—define, if you please, for this is serious. What tool?” and Capstick frowned.

“Well, I don’t know what sort of tool they send to parliament; but, if you’ll be so good, just feel here.” Saying this, Jem took off his hat, and turning himself, presented the back part of his head to the touch of Capstick.

“Bless my heart! Dear me—a very dreadful wound! My poor fellow—good Jem!”—and Capstick put his arm upon Jem’s neck, and with a troubled look, cried—“Who was the atrocious miscreant!—eh!—the scoundrel!”

“Oh no; he did n’t mean nothing. You see, it

was last night, while I was waiting for you till the house was up. Taking a quiet pint and a pipe among the other servants, some on ’em begun to talk about bribery and corruption; and did n’t they sit there and pull their masters to pieces; I should think a little more than they pulled one another to bits inside. Well, your name come up, and all about the petition; and somebody said you’d be turned out; condemned like a stale salmon at Billingsgate. I did n’t say nothing to this; till Ralph Gum—the saucy varmint, though he’s my own flesh and blood; that is, as far as marriage can make it”—

“Marriage can do a good deal that way,” said Capstick, smiling pensively.

“Till Ralph Gum—he was waiting for the marquis—cried out, ‘What! Capstick, the muffin-maker!’”

“I do not forget the muffins,” said Capstick, meekly. “On the contrary; in parliament I shall be proud to stand upon them.”

“But he said more than that: ‘Why, he’s a thing we’ll turn out neck and heels; he’s only a tool!’”

“Oh, a tool!” cried Capstick, “I am a tool, am I! Very well: a tool! What said you to this?”

“Nothing—only this. He was sitting next to me, and I said—‘You saucy monkey, hold your tongue, or learn better manners’—and with this, in the softest way in the world, I broke my pipe over his head: whereupon, the marquis’ coachman and footmen all swore you was a tool, and nothing but a tool—and they would n’t see their livery insulted, and—I forget how it ended, but there was a changing of pewter-pots, and somehow or other this”—and Jem passed his hand over his bruised head—“this is one on ’em.”

For a few minutes Capstick remained silent. At length he said, determinedly—“Jem, I feel that it would be some satisfaction to me to see this Mrs. Snipeton.”

“What for?” asked Jem, in his simplicity.

“Why—well—I don’t know; but if she is really what people say, there can be no harm in looking on a beautiful woman.”

“Well, I don’t know—but for certain, they’d never do no harm, if they never was looked upon,” said Jem.

“Jem, you ought to know me by this time; ought to know that since Mrs. Capstick died I look upon beauty as no more than a painted picture.”

“Well, that’s all right enough, so long as we don’t ask the pictures to walk out of their frames,” answered Jem. “But, sir, in this parliament matter—and I’d sooner die than tell a lie to you, in the same way as I think it my bound duty to tell you all the truth, though you do sometimes call me James and Mr. Aniseed, instead of Jem for doing it—in this parliament matter, master”—and Jem paused, and looked mournfully at Capstick.

“Out with it,” said the member for Liquorish. “After the hustings, surely I can bear anything. Speak.”

“Well, then, and you’ll not be offended! But if ever there was a tool in parliament, master—now, don’t be hurt—you are a tool, and nothing better than a tool. There! When they were flinging pewter-pots about last night, I did n’t choose to own as much; now, when we’re together, I must say it. Member for Liquorish!

La, bless you! as I said afore, you're member for Spite and Revenge, and all sorts of wickedness."

"I certainly will see Mrs. Snipeton," said Capstick, "and to-morrow, Jem; yes, to-morrow."

In pursuit of this determination, Mr. Capstick—with no forewarning of his intended visit to the master of the house—opened the garden gate, and proceeded up the path to the cottage, followed by Bright Jem; who in his heart was hugely pleased at the unceremonious manner in which his master stalked, like a sheriff's officer, into the sanctuary of wedded love, or what is more, of wedded jealousy; calm, authoritative, self-contained, as though he came to take possession of the dove-cote. Even Dorothy Vale was startled by the abrupt intrusion; and looking from the door, and rubbing her arms with quickened energy, begged to know "what they wanted there?" Ere, however, Capstick could descend to make due answer, Becky ran from the door, with many a voluble "dear heart!" and "who'd ha' thought it!" and "is your honor well!"

"Very well, my maid; very well," said Capstick. "I should like to see Mrs. Snipeton."

"La! now, what ill luck," cried Becky, "she's gone out a horseback with master; but she won't be long, if you'll only be so good as to walk in, and wait a little while; she's such a sweet lady, she'll be glad to see you."

Dorothy said nothing; but hugging and rubbing her arms, looked sidelong at the new maid; looked at her, as one, whose glib tongue had in one minute talked away her place; for assuredly did Dorothy, even in her dim vision, see Becky with her bundle trundled from the house, as soon as Mr. Snipeton should learn the treason of his handmaid.

"I'll walk about the garden till they come back," said Capstick; "I'm fond of flowers; very fond."

"They won't come back together; for master's gone to Lannun; but the young man, the new servant"—

"Ha! the young man that took you from St. Mary Axe," said Jem; and Becky nodded and colored.

"Both of you new together, it seems," observed Capstick, meaning nothing; though Becky, coloring still deeper, thought she saw a world of significance in the careless words of the member of parliament. But then it was a member of parliament who spoke; and there must be something in every syllable he uttered. That he should couple herself and St. Giles was very odd; quite a proof that he knew more than most people.

Capstick had lounged up the garden, Dorothy marvelling at his ease; whilst Jem held short discourse with Becky. "And he's a good honest young man, eh? Well, he looks like it," said Jem.

"I never goes by looks, I don't," said Becky. "Talking about looks, how is that dark young man you knocked in the gutter? Your nevey, sir, is n't he? How is he?"

"Why, I may say, my dear, he's in the gutter still, and there let him be. But as for your fellow-servant, I think"—said Jem—"I think he's an honest young fellow."

"I should break my heart do you know—I mean—I should be so sorry—in course I should—if he was n't. He's so good-tempered; so quiet-spoken;

so willing to give a helping-hand to anybody. And yet for all this; somehow or t'other, he doesn't seem himself. One minute he'll be merry as a sultan; and afore you can speak, his face will go all into a shadow. Can't be happy, I think."

"Perhaps not," said Jem; "I was n't myself when I was about his time of life. Perhaps, Becky, perhaps he's in love."

"Don't know, I'm sure; how should I?" said Becky, turning short upon her heel; whilst Jem followed his master, at length resolved to narrate to him the history of St. Giles. Again and again Jem had attempted it; and then stopt, huddling up the story as best he could. For the new dignity of Capstick had made him—as Jem sometimes thought—cold and cautious; and after all, it might not be proper to bring together a returned transport and a member of parliament. The garden was winding and large; but Jem could not well miss his master, inasmuch as the orator was heard very loudly declaiming; and Jem, following the sound, speedily came up with Capstick, who, with his hat upon the ground, his right arm outstretched, and his left tucked under his left coat-tail, was vehemently calling upon "the attention and the common-sense, if he was not too bold in asking such a favor," of a triple row of tall hollyhocks, representing for the time the members of the house of commons, and unconsciously playing their parts with great fidelity, by nodding—nodding at every sentence that fell from the honorable orator. "There is nothing like exercising the lungs in the pure air," said Capstick, slightly confused; and picking up his hat, and falling into his usual manner.

"I think I should know what it was," said Jem, "calling coaches in a November fog; jest like hallooing through wet blankets."

"Demosthenes—you never heard of him—but that's no matter: Demosthenes," said Capstick, "used to speak to the sea."

"Well; he'd the best on it in one way," said Jem; "the fishes could n't contradict him. But surely, now—upon your word, sir—you don't really mean to make a speech in parliament!" Capstick's eye glistened.—"You do? Lord help you! when, sir—when?"

"Why, Jem, I can't answer for myself. Perhaps, to-night—perhaps, to-morrow. If I'm provoked, Jem."

"Provoked, sir! Who's to provoke you, if you're determined to sit with your mouth shut!" said Jem.

"The truth is, Jem, I had resolved to sit a whole session, and not say a syllable. But I shall be aggravated to speak, I know I shall. The fact is, I did think I should be abashed—knocked clean down—by the tremendous wisdom before, behind me, on all sides of me. Now—it is n't so, Jem," and Capstick looked big. "I did think my great difficulty would be to speak; whereas, hearing what I do hear, the difficulty for me is to hold my tongue. In this way—I feel it—I shall be made an orator of against my will. By the way, Jem, talking of oratory, just sit down in that arbor, and fancy yourself the house of commons."

"Could n't do it sir." Capstick imperatively waved his arm. "Well, then—there, sir," said Jem; and he seated himself bolt upright in a honeysuckle bower, and took off his hat, and smoothed down his few speckled hairs; and put on a face of gravity.

"That won't do at all," cried Capstick, "I

just want to try a little speech, and that 's not a bit like the house of commons. No; roll yourself about; and now whistle a little bit; and now put on your hat; and now throw your legs upon the seat; and, above all, seem to be doing anything but listening to me. If you seem to attend to what I say, you 'll put me out at once. Not at all parliamentary, Jem."

"Shall I shuffle my legs, and drum my fingers upon the table? Will that do?" cried Jem.

"Pretty well; that will be something," answered Capstick.

"Or I tell you what, sir—if, while you was making your oration, I was to play upon this Jew's-harp"—and Jem produced that harmonious iron from his waistcoat pocket—"would that be parliamentary and noisy enough?"

"We 'll try the Jew's-harp," replied Capstick, "for I have heard much worse noises since I sat for Liquorish. Wait a minute"—for Jem began to preludize—"and let me explain. The motion I am going to make, Jem, is to shorten the time in the pillory." Jem shook his head hopelessly. "According to the law, as at present operating, the time of the pillory is one hour. Now, I don't want to be called a revolutionist, Jem; I don't want to array all the respectability and all the property of the land against me—"

"Don't, sir, don't; if you love your precious peace of mind, don't think of it," cried Jem.

"Therefore, I do not at present intend to move the total abolition of the pillory," said Capstick.

"You 'd be stoned in the streets, if you did. People will bear a good deal, sir; but they won't have their rights interfered with in that manner. Do take care of yourself, pray do. I should n't like to see you in the tower," said Jem, with genuine tenderness. "Let the pillory alone, sir; touch that, and folks will swear you 're going to lay your hands upon the golden crown next; for it 's wonderful what they do mix up with the crown, sometimes, to be sure."

"Fear not, Jem. I shall respect the wholesome prejudices of my countrymen; and therefore shall only move that the time in the pillory shall henceforth be reduced from one hour to half. That 's gentle, I think!"

Jem stroked his chin—shook his head. "I know what they 'll call it, sir: interfering with the liberty of the subject. No, they 'll say—our forefathers, and their fathers afore 'em, all stood an hour, and why should n't we?"

"I 'm prepared for a little opposition, Jem; but, just fancy yourself the house, while I speak my speech. Make as much noise, and be as inattentive as possible, and then I shall get on." Jem obediently buzzed—buzzed with his Jew's-harp, shambled with his feet, rocked himself backwards and forwards; and, to the extent of his genius, endeavored to multiply himself into a very full house.

Capstick took off his hat—held forth his right arm as before, with the supplementary addition of a piece of paper in his hand, and again with his other arm supported his left coat-tail. "Sir," said Capstick, looking as full as he could at Jem, who rocked and shifted every minute—"Sir, it was an observation of a Roman emperor—"

"Which one?" asked Jem.

"That 's immaterial," answered Capstick. "A question that will certainly not be asked in debate. I take a Roman emperor as something strong to begin with—'of a Roman emperor that *Qui facit per alium*'"—

"Hallo!" cried Jem, holding the Jew's-harp wide away from his mouth; "what 's that—Latin!"

"Latin," answered Capstick.

"Well—my stars!"—said Jem—"I never knewed that you knowed Latin."

"Nor did I, Jem," replied Capstick smilingly. "But I don't know how it is; when a man once gets into parliament, Latin seems to come upon him as a matter of course. Now go on with your Jew's-harp, and make as much noise as you like, but don't speak to me. 'Tis n't parliamentary. Now then," and Capstick resumed the senator—"it was an observation of a Roman emperor!"—

"If you please, sir, I 've laid some bread and cheese and ale in the parlor," said Becky, breaking in upon the debate. "It 's a hot day, sir, and I thought you might be tired."

"Humph! Well—I don't know. What, Jem"—asked Capstick, smacking his lips—"what do you propose?"

"Why," answered Jem, rising, "I propose that the house do now adjourn."

Capstick returned the paper to his pocket, and taking up his hat, said—"I second the motion." After a very short pause, he added—"And it is adjourned accordingly." Whereupon, he and Jem turned to follow Becky, who had run on before them, down another path. In less than a minute, however, a shriek rang through the garden.

"Why, that 's the gal! she 's hurt, surely," cried Jem.

"Pooh, nonsense," said Capstick, quickening his pace, "it 's nothing; taken a frog for a crocodile—or something of the sort. Women love to squall; it shows their weakness. It can't be anything—"

"Oh, sir—sir—sir—" cried Becky, flying up the garden, and rushing to Capstick—"they 've stole her—carried her off—my dear, dear missus!"

"Carried off! Mrs. Snipeton—the lady"—exclaimed Capstick.

"Stole her away by force—oh, my poor master—oh, my dear missus—the young man will tell you all—master's heart will break—my sweet lady!" And Becky, with flowing tears, wrung her hands, and was as one possessed.

"Why? Eh—what is all this?" said Capstick to St. Giles, who looked pale and stupefied. "Fellow, what 's this?"

"I 'll tell you all about it, sir"—said St. Giles, hastily. "The lady's horse was swifter than mine—I could no how keep up with her. And when we turned out of Highgate we"—here St. Giles turned deathly pale, and his feet sliding from under him, he fell to the earth.

"He 's dead—he 's dead," cried Becky, falling upon her knees at his side, and lifting up his head, when her hands were instantly covered with blood, drawn by the edgell of Blast. On this she renewed her screams; renewed her exclamations of despair. "He was dead—murdered."

At this minute old Snipeton ran, reeling up the path. Dorothy Vale, more by her chalk-like face, than with her tongue, had revealed the mischief to her master. "Missus was gone—carried off—the man was up the garden." His life—nothing but his life—should satisfy the cheated husband. Snipeton rushed to the group; and when he saw St. Giles prostrate, insensible; the old man, grinding his teeth, howled his curses, and, in very impotence, worked his hands like a demon balked of his revenge.

A SON TO HIS FATHER.

We think the Beauty Book of this year very far from the least meritorious of its series. It has several very graceful *vers de société*; some pretty and interesting stories; fragments of real poetry; and one or two papers of interest beyond the hour. We have not often read, in the same space, a tale so powerfully and unaffectedly told as that which, with the signature of Z., appears intended to illustrate the evils of the old system of capital punishment. To understand what we shall extract, it is only necessary to premise that a banker of formal and not popular manners, but of strict and exact integrity and most unblemished character, has been robbed, with supposed aggravated circumstances of personal violence, by a young man who had been several years a clerk in his bank, and was suddenly dismissed on account of some trifling failure in punctuality. He prosecutes to conviction; and a few days before the execution receives the following letter. It seems to us full of a beauty very rare in compositions of this kind. There is no violent effort. There is no convulsive strain. The pathos is manly, direct, and simple.

"Sir,—It is with many conflicting feelings that I now address you, and I can scarcely hope that you will condescend to peruse a letter from a condemned felon like me. *Justice* has been your plea—*justice* also actuates me. I acknowledge that I have sinned against my God, my country, and yourself, in committing one of the crimes for which I am about to suffer, for the robbery was planned by me; of intent to murder I am as innocent as the child unborn. But, sir, I am not the only guilty one—it is to *your* sin that I owe my existence; and from this venial offence of yours, which has long since been forgotten by yourself and by the world, have sprung all the crimes I ever have committed.

"At the period of your marriage you parted from my mother, believing that you amply compensated for all her wrongs by the gift of one hundred pounds, exacting from her a solemn promise that you should never hear from her again—a promise which, as you well know, she never violated, nor did she reveal your name to me until she was upon her death-bed.

"At her desire I solemnly pledged myself that the secret should never pass my lips, except, under very extraordinary circumstances, I should feel compelled to make it known to yourself. I was at this time fifteen years of age, and had hitherto been supported and decently educated by my mother's exertions; but she had nothing to leave me beyond a few pounds in ready money, which were little more than sufficient to defray the expenses of her funeral.

"I had loved my mother tenderly, and on her decease felt myself to be one of the most desolate creatures upon earth. Lowly as my station appeared to be, I felt inconceivably pained at the thoughts of my disgraceful birth, and that the name which I bore was not my lawful one, (my mother having passed as a widow,) for *pride* was the inheritance which I received from you. Nevertheless, I had an indescribable longing to see my other earthly parent. I thought, perhaps, you possessed some of my mother's tenderness, and that if I could find out where you were living, and could sometimes look at you unobserved, I should not feel utterly alone in the world.

"Full of these thoughts I packed up my little all, and walked from — to London, a distance of

nearly forty miles. Having always borne an excellent character in my own neighborhood, I carried with me several respectable letters of recommendation, and in a few days succeeded in getting employment in a retail bookseller's shop.

"One object now solely occupied my mind—that of seeing you; yet I feared to make any inquiries about, or even to mention your name, lest my motive might be suspected. By reference to the London Directory, I found out what I imagined to be your town residence, and every evening I paced up and down before your house in the hope of getting even one glimpse of you, for my very heart yearned within me to see you.

"After the lapse of some months I discovered that you left town at four o'clock in the afternoon, and as I was rarely sent messages, or had any opportunity of going to the city during the morning, I was almost inclined to give up my pursuit in despair, when an apparently accidental circumstance, which I need not now recall to your recollection, placed me in your employment.

"I entered your office with a throbbing heart and an almost fevered brain, but the stern dignity of your deportment chilled my blood, and I was soon hopeless of ever gaining your affections. My youthful dream had fled. I felt that I could not love you; yet I resolved to be useful to you, and to discharge all my duties faithfully. I wished to gain your confidence, and, as it were, to compel you to respect the outcast who fed upon the crumbs which fell from your table. I sometimes thought upon the subject until my heart was ready to burst. During the four years spent in your office my conduct was faultless towards you; nor was I to blame for the neglect of duty which caused us to separate. That neglect proceeded from your legitimate son; but when he did not come forward to clear me, I scorned to clear myself.

"From the moment we parted my mind became imbued with feelings of the deepest despair. Having unjustly lost that confidence which I had labored for years to gain, I became firmly persuaded that I should never again succeed in any undertaking. I felt myself to be as the son of the bondwoman who was to be cast out, but my fate to be harder than that of Ishmael, for I had no mother to accompany me and to watch over my wanderings. I believed that henceforth my hand should be against every man, and every man's hand against me.

"I walked the whole day without feeling need of bodily sustenance. Towards night, as I instinctively bent my steps towards my lodgings, I met with an old acquaintance, who had for a few months been my fellow-clerk in your office. He asked me to turn with him; I did so, although I had long known him to be a young man of loose habits. He brought me to a gambling-house, and asked me to enter and try my fortune. I complied unresistingly, and had at first what are called a few lucky hits. My attention was arrested, and my mind strongly excited. I remained there two days and nights, and thenceforward became the companion of gamblers and sharpers. When successful in obtaining money, I drowned care in all manner of riotous living, and at other times I was reduced to the very brink of starvation. It was at one of those periods of desperation, when every resource had failed with myself and my companions, that we planned the robbery for which I am now about to suffer. I suggested your house, recollecting a box in the office where a considerable sum of ready money for private expenses was usually kept;

and I offered my services upon condition that we should go unarm'd, for, guilty as I was, I shuddered at the thoughts of shedding blood, and I calculated upon the old housekeeper *only* being in the house as usual. The idea that you would sleep in town that fatal night did not enter my head, for I had never known you to do so before. The blow which you received as you entered the office with a light in your hand, I again most solemnly protest was not given by me; it was given by one of my guilty companions as he made his escape, and it was for your sake that I did not follow him. I remained behind to raise you up, and, if necessary, to call for help; for at that moment every selfish feeling was lost in my intense anxiety for your restoration. Once more I loved you as my father; I pressed you to my heart, and I resolved the instant your recollection returned to tell you who I was, and to cast myself upon your mercy. But you opened your eyes only to identify me as the watchman entered, and I was carried off as a murderer, literally stained with your blood, which had flowed upon me from the wound you had received in your fall, and which I had torn off my neckcloth to bind up.

"I have made innumerable efforts to obtain an interview with you, but could not succeed; and a regard for truth and for your reputation, which amid all my wanderings I had never wholly lost, prevented me from confiding in a third person.

"My life is now forfeited; no effort of yours can save it. Why then do I make this disclosure? Is it prompted by revenge? I hope it is not; but that it may be a means of awakening in *your* mind the repentance which I trust I have experienced. My only hope is that of the thief on the cross. Much human feeling appears to pervade this letter, for which I implore forgiveness. It has been written at long and distressing intervals, and I cannot now revise it.

"I enclose you a letter in my mother's handwriting, and a book which you gave her, in order that you may be convinced that no impostor addresses you. I know not what to subscribe myself, but that which I am,

"A CONDEMNED FELON."

STRAY LEAVES, BY A SUFFOLK RECTOR.

JUDGING from internal evidence, we should not have ascribed this volume to a clergyman, much less to a rector.* There is nothing about it to suggest the classic, the university, or even the diffuse though measured and scholarly style of a divine. The only professional trait is rather medical than clerical; and consists of that imposing sort of confidence which physicians, or men claiming to be physicians, exhibit at pleasure-towns, where people congregate without any defined position, and those get the foremost place who, like young Cibber in the *Dunciad*, take it.

Stray Leaves from a Freemason's Note-book amacks a good deal more of the practised littérateur than of the parish-rector. The leading points of a subject are seized; incidents which the writer has seen, or anecdotes which he may have heard, are cleverly pressed into his service, and turned to account, so as to give a dramatic air to the narrative; the style is rapid and forcible, but rather strained than natural. Whenever the author undertakes a story, his characters and incidents are exaggerated, in the manner of a person accustomed

* It reminds us of some sketches in the *Boston Atlas*.—*Liv. Age*.

to sacrifice truth and probability to a coarse effect; and he does not succeed in impressing the reader with his accuracy; so that his anecdotes when professing to be matters of fact are not received with implicit confidence. It is probable that he has heard them, not invented them; it is possible that they may be true; but a strong doubt lurks in the mind as to whether the writer received them in the way he represents, which of course raises misgivings as to the authenticity of the stories themselves.

The volume, as may be inferred from the title, is a set of miscellaneous papers. Except a few tales, they are substantially reminiscences by the author; sometimes consisting of a series of anecdotes of an individual, of whom the writer professes a personal knowledge—as, "Sir William Webb Follett in Early Life," whose schoolfellow he represents himself to have been; others, like that of "Canning in Retirement," are bits of biography, but resting on no authority, and, with the doubtful impression we have already spoken of, they do not produce the effect which as mere literary efforts they ought to attain. There are a few essays—as the "Half-a-dozen Words about the Poor,"—specious, but not very practical; and a few tales distinguished by clever force, but untruthful exaggeration. Several have already appeared in periodical publications—as "The Foreign Sorecress and the British Statesman," a German sort of story of Canning and Huskisson going to a Parisian fortune-teller and having their deaths exactly represented. "The Measure Meted out to others Measured to us again" appeared in *Blackwood*; and it has the rapidity, startling effects, and clever management of the narrative, which distinguish the high-spiced tales of the author of the "Diary of a late Physician," with an equal disregard of probability.

Assuming the truth of the following story of Canning, it is not a bad one. The mimicry must have been rich.

"One peculiarity he possessed, which is but partially known—his thorough remembrance of a voice, and his ability of connecting it at any interval of time with the party to whom it belonged. More than one instance of this faculty is remembered at Hinckley.

"He was dining with a large party at Mr. Cheshyre's, the medical gentleman before referred to, when a note was brought in and handed to the host, with an intimation that the bearer begged to see him for five minutes.

"Mr. C. left his party with reluctance, and was absent some time. When he returned, he prefaced his lengthy apologies by observing, he 'had been detained by one of the most remarkable men of the day;' that the gentleman 'was by accident passing through Hinckley, and could not pause on his route; that he 'purposed placing one of his family under his (Mr. Cheshyre's) care;' and that 'he (Mr. C.) was obliged to listen to all his arrangements.'

"'I will name him,' said Canning, gayly; 'and then drink his health.'

"The latter point may be very easily managed; but the former will, I believe, baffle even your acuteness, Mr. Canning.'

"This was said with some degree of tartness; for among other affectations which the wealthy quack indulged in was that of profound mystery with respect to the most trivial occurrences.

"'Your visitor, sir, was Wilberforce,' said Canning, stoutly.

"How could you possibly discover that?" cried his annoyed host. "We conversed with closed doors—he sent in no card—as we parted, he spoke but five words."

"Of which I heard but two."

"What were they?"

"Conventional arrangement," said Canning, imitating Wilberforce's distinct pronunciation, and dwelling on each separate syllable."

Here are traits of Follett in boyhood. The master of the school was the Lempriere of the Classical Dictionary.

"Equally judicious was the doctor's estimate of the late attorney-general. 'Webb Follett is not brilliant, but he is solid; he will not snatch, but he will earn distinction. I shall not live to see it; but it will be so.'"

"Now, this conclusion was the more curious because Follett was not one of those spirits who hit peculiarly the doctor's taste. Follett, as a boy, was rather slow. There is no use in denying it. There was at school nothing dashing or brilliant about him. His articulation in boyhood was thick; and his demeanor somewhat sluggish. Now, sharpness, quickness, and readiness, the doctor delighted in. Again: Follett was not fond of classics; the doctor revelled in them. And yet he appreciated his pupil and did him justice. In proof of this, I well recollect that when one of the under-masters (Osborne was the reverend gentleman's name) said to the doctor, after a hasty perusal, 'Webb Follett's verses, sir, want imagination,' the rejoinder instantly followed—'But, sir, they possess—what many verses do not, sense!'"

"There was one peculiarity about the late attorney-general in boyhood, which, I am inclined to think, accompanied him in after-life. He possessed the entire confidence of our little community. The sentiment he inspired, generally was respect. 'Well! that's Webb Follett's opinion,' was a dictum which settled many a boyish quarrel and stilled many an angry difference. Perhaps this might mainly be owing to his manner; for even in boyhood he was calm, and grave, and self-possessed. There was a composure about him which no petty irritations could ruffle. Webb Follett in a passion would have been a rare spectacle on the play-ground."

The following anecdotes are attributed to the Duke of Sussex, and are professed to be told to the author during a visit to Newstead, by a "middle-aged, military-looking man." They are "curious if true."

THE PRINCESS CHARLOTTE.

"The prince regent had little real affection for his daughter. The fact is, he feared her! The day after he learnt her demise, his comment on the event to one of his intimates was this—'The nation will lament her, but to me it is a relief!'"

THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON AND LORD CASTLEREAGH.

"The regard which the duke felt for Lord Castlereagh was great, undissembled, and enduring to the last. It puzzled most people. No one could well account for it, because no two men had less in common as to habits and character. The duke, all soldierly frankness; the foreign secretary, steeped in *tracasserie*, finesse, and diplomatic manoeuvres. The duke speaks, and you seize at once his meaning; Lord Castlereagh rounded sentence after

sentence, and you knew as much of his real bent and object when he had finished as when he began! It shows, however, how deeply the duke had studied the diplomatist, since he was the first to notice Lord Castlereagh's aberration of intellect. He mentioned it first to the king, and then to his colleagues. His impression was deemed ill-founded; so fixed, however, was it in the duke's mind, that, some days before the event, he said to a dependent of the minister—one of his secretaries, if I mistake not—'Watch his lordship carefully; his mind is going.'"

THE LATE QUEEN CAROLINE.

"One and not the least curious feature in the affair was, that the regent was kept fully informed, by some unsuspected agent, of the daily life of his unfortunate consort. He was in full possession of all her movements. She never had a party but he knew who composed it. She never took a journey without the route and the incidents of travel being reported to him in detail. Every escapade of hers was duly chronicled, and faithfully too; for when proceedings were finally taken, the subordinate law people—those who had the getting-up of the case—found the king more *au fait* of the whole business than they were themselves. 'Amend that,' said he, on one occasion; 'you are wrong as to time. The date of that transaction is so and so,'—naming the day accurately; 'and the parties present were these;' and he repeated their names one by one. Great pains were taken to ascertain the king's informant; but in vain."

Some of the papers are defensive or illustrative of masonic character and virtues, so far as these may be unfolded to the uninitiated. The profits of the book are to be devoted to the fund for the projected "Asylum for the Aged and Decayed Freemason."

THE AGE OF EGYPT.—"The massive temples and obelisks covered with hieroglyphics, and the colossal statues, which have already outlived three thousand years, prove the high civilization of the kingdom, even before the Jews had become a people, before the Greeks had got an alphabet."—*Sharpe's Egypt*.

NEW ASTRONOMICAL PROFESSORSHIP.—The French government is about to establish a new professorship of *Le Mécanique céleste* for M. Le Verrier, whose mathematical calculations led to the discovery of the new planet.

ITALY.—Affairs in Rome are assuming a strange aspect of free activity. The first number of an English weekly newspaper, called the *Roman Advertiser*, had appeared, and a list is given of five other new papers on the eve of publication. One, *La Giurisprudenza*, is intended to report criminal trials, which have hitherto been conducted in secret.

The embarrassed state of the public finances is one of the difficulties which beset the career of the new pontiff. But he addresses himself with vigor to the task; and, finding that the evil cannot be met by the abolition of sinecures and reductions in his own household, he has broached the project of an income-tax. At the same time, the taxes on salt and on corn ground at the mill (most oppressive to the peasantry) are to be abolished.

Fanny Elssler has been at the Vatican. She was presented to the Pope by Colonel Pfyffer, of the Swiss Guard; and Pius blandly said, that "talent in every department of human excellence was ever welcome to his dominions."

From the Examiner.

Correspondence of John, Fourth Duke of Bedford: selected from the Originals at Woburn Abbey. With an Introduction. By Lord John Russell. Longman & Co.

THIS, the third and last volume of the *Bedford Correspondence*, deals with the last ten years of the life of the duke, and the first ten of the reign of George the Third. The Introduction by Lord John Russell is more important and detailed than those which preceded the former volumes; and we propose, with brief preface, to lay such extracts from it before the reader, as appear to us to contain valuable illustrations of this much disputed though not very creditable period of history.

Lord John Russell is too sagacious and sound a critic to rate too highly the political or other virtues of the time. He frankly admits the loose and discordant condition of that once great whig party which, in the interval between Walpole's fall and the death of George the Second, had to contend with the "unbending ambition and sullen discontent" of the elder Pitt. They were "divided from each other by personal predilections, and not by distinct lines of policy." "Their quarrels and their friendships were precarious and capricious." "There was no reason why any one statesman should not join with any other statesman to whom he had been the week before most opposed." There was no "great question in dispute, like the revolution settlement, or the American war, or the French war, upon which parties widely separated in opinion could take their stand." All this is true; and we doubt if Lord John Russell has given it sufficient weight in his severer judgments of the character and conduct of Pitt. Without undertaking to say in what precise proportions the defects of that great statesman should be divided between his ambition and his gout, we say that beyond all question his virtues were rare and remarkable in that age, and wholly peculiar to himself. "Had the character of Mr. Pitt been more conciliatory, his great qualities might have rallied around him a national party." Not, we suspect, in the sense intended by Lord John Russell. The men he has himself so justly described were not the men for any such project or alliance. The truth is that the only approach to anything of a national party ever made in those days, was really made by Pitt. If he failed to consolidate it, it was because he stood erect, while every one else was shuffling or crawling. Lord John Russell implies that he had no fixed principles. He had no solid party attachments; but there may be fixed principles independent of these—such as the caring for a country and a people. Pitt cared for both; and it was because, as we firmly believe, there was not another statesman of the time who had the heart to think of them or the courage to face them, that these Thanes fell from him, and he failed in his later designs. There was hardly a colleague or a rival that did not ordinarily employ deceit, truckling, and servility, as a part of that stock-in-trade which it was Pitt's fixed principle to disregard and despise. Is such a man to be judged by the measure of such associates? What says Lord John Russell himself (and it is most happily said) of the fitness of the time itself to supply even the means of judgment on such a man? "Neither did there exist any large atmosphere of public opinion in which politicians moved. In the confined space,

from which the air was excluded, the guinea and the feather were of equal weight."

We can point out no other defect in Lord John Russell's able and most spirited introduction to the contents of this volume, than that which we have indicated (and which was almost inseparable from a natural desire to vindicate his ancestor's memory) of a tendency to overrate the value of peculiar party and family combinations. We are not insensible to the vast good which has been achieved by such means on great occasions of our history; but we think there have also been times, and that Lord Chatham's was one of them, when those party views and family organizations have substituted factitious duties for the higher moral and national responsibilities. Certain it is, however, that, if an intelligent and honest love of party may be forgiven in any statesman—in the case of one who, like Lord John Russell, has been one of its noblest and most unswerving representatives in modern history, and who by its means has achieved public benefits and blessings of no ordinary nature, it may win both admiration and forgiveness.

We proceed to give the extracts we have promised. They will be found not only acute and sagacious in their general estimates of character, as well as versed in the nicest details of the political history and correspondences of the period, but also, as mere specimens of literary composition, correct, finished, and powerful. The style loses none of its weight in its brilliancy and ease.

Lord Bute's notable project on his pupil's accession to the throne, by which he proposed, as Bubb Doddington has it, "to recover monarchy from the inveterate usurpation of oligarchy," is thus described by Lord John Russell:

"Lord Bute appears to have thought that he could govern a constitutional monarchy, as a favorite courtier might govern a despotic state, solely by the will of the prince. He wished to glide upon the scene without ostentation, and unfold gradually his pretensions and his powers. But the execution of such a scheme was dangerous, and might prove, as it did prove, fatal to his creeping ambition. He entertained a design of becoming secretary of state, by making Lord Holderness pretend to quarrel with his colleagues, and resign in apparent anger. But this indirect and cowardly expedient was not relished even by Bubb Doddington, and served only to show how unequal his mind was to his fortune. The Duke of Newcastle therefore remained First Lord of the Treasury, thwarted indeed by the underhand cunning of the favorite, but in the apparent possession of his former eminence. 'There is nothing new under the sun,' said Horace Walpole. 'Nor under the grandson,' replied George Selwyn."

"Notwithstanding these outward signs, the Earl of Bute had conceived, and successfully instilled into his pupil, a new scheme of foreign and domestic policy. In regard to the former, while he was averse to a sudden abandonment of our continental allies, and a relaxation of our maritime exertions, he wished to calm down the warlike fervor of the nation, and to secure the repose of Europe by an honorable peace."

"In respect to domestic affairs, he aimed at no less than the dissolution of party connexions, and the supremacy of the king over the parliament. 'Mettre le Roy hors de page,' says Mr. Burke, 'became a sort of watchword.' And it was constantly in the mouths of all the runners of the

court that nothing could preserve the balance of the constitution from being overturned by the rabble, or by a faction of the nobility, but to free the sovereign effectually from that ministerial tyranny under which the royal dignity had been oppressed in the person of his majesty's grandfather."

In a later passage, the qualities of prudence and caution requisite for the conduct of so refined a scheme are inferred from the opening acts of the young king's reign:

"That the project of restoring to the crown that absolute direction and control which Charles the First and James the Second had been forced to relinquish, and from which George the First, and George the Second, had quietly abstained, was entertained and attempted by George the Third, can hardly be doubted.

"It must be owned, that the moment was in many respects eminently auspicious to the execution of such a plan. The Stuarts, as Mr. Adolphus remarks, had fallen into contempt; and the whig families were no longer necessary to guard the parliamentary title of the house of Hanover. Let us add to this, that the whigs were themselves broken into sections, separately weak, and too jealous of each other to combine. The Duke of Newcastle, the ancient chief of the party, had lowered himself by folly, and his party by corruption. Lord Holland was hated, and could not stand alone; Mr. Pitt was haughty and self-willed, and had broken his connexion with the other whig chiefs; the Duke of Bedford, in his eagerness for peace, had acted with and under Lord Bute. Nor was the king deficient in the prudence and caution requisite for the conduct of a refined scheme.

"A trifling incident which occurred on his accession, showed the power he had acquired over his countenance and manner. He had arranged beforehand with one of his grandfather's attendants, that a particular message or note should signify to him the death of George the Second. The note was brought to him when he was riding. He showed no emotion; but observing that his horse was lame, turned his head homewards; when he got off his horse, he told the groom in a whisper that he had said the horse was lame, and desired that he might not be contradicted.

"A trying temptation exhibited the king to his subjects in a most favorable light. His two predecessors arriving at the throne at a mature age, had given the example of a court where immorality was combined with monotony, and vice reigned together with dulness. The young prince was not insensible to the charms of beauty. His attentions to Lady Sarah Lennox were soon remarked, and there can be little doubt that her uncle, Lord Holland, entertained hopes of an alliance of the house of Richmond with the throne. But these symptoms of a growing passion were speedily arrested: grave reasons of state were allowed to prevail, and a princess of Mecklenburg Strelitz was invited to preside over a family, where a young sovereign gave an example to his subjects of moral purity.

"Such a prince was well fitted to acquire an ascendancy over a people attached to the domestic virtues, and unaccustomed to self-denial on the throne."

Nevertheless we may doubt if so considerable and confessed a proficiency in hypocrisy and falsehood may fairly be ranked with the domestic virtues and self-denials, or offer to a people the right kind of example of moral purity. Lord John Russell thinks it necessary to remark, in the course of his

essay, that it has been the fate of George the Third to have his faults greatly exaggerated; but, desiring to be an honest historian, he cannot refrain, in a later passage, from adding his own high authority not the less weighty for its courteous phrase, to the bitter chronicle of those faults. Translate "reserve" into its plainer word, and add to it "intrigue," "foolish prejudices," "want of charity," "brooding sullenness," "antipathies," "obstinacy," and "narrow intellect;" and there is wanting no single trait of that most unlovely character, which it is the preposterous office of the Adolphuses of history to hold forth as a pattern of the public and private virtues.

"The child was father to the man." The same facility in imbibing foolish prejudices; the same obstinacy in adhering to them; the same want of frankness in his intercourse with men, and the same want of charity in his religious principles; the same strength of memory for those who offended him, and the same brooding sullenness against those who opposed his will, which had been observed in the boy, were manifest in the king. Thus it happened that for several years he made the punishment of Wilkes a darling project of his government; that when that mock patriot grew tired of brawling, the subjection of America became the prevailing object of the royal policy; and that, at a later period, the exclusion of the Irish people from the privileges of the constitution, absorbed his narrow intellect and grew into a passion. Thus, too, it happened, that on the occasion of the repeal of the Stamp Act, in 1767, and on the proposal of Mr. Fox's India bill in 1784, the ostensible ministers of the crown were treated with reserve and dissimulation; while the lords of the bed-chamber and the party of the king's friends received their private instructions to oppose the measure to which the royal sanction had apparently been given. The treatment of Lord Grenville and Lord Grey, in 1807, on the subject of the Roman Catholics, was marked by similar reserve, and not very dissimilar intrigues. Thus too it happened that statesmen of great weight in parliament were for many years excluded from the king's councils by the obstinacy of personal resentment, or the antipathies of an uncharitable temper."

A few sentences which follow these, in summing up the effects of even a partial success of this inauspicious system, and speculating on what its more prolonged results might have been, contain thoughts which, coming from Lord John Russell, will be read with peculiar interest in reference to late transactions:

"The will of a prince of the most ordinary understanding, of the most confined education, and of the most unhappy opinions, was made to prevail over the enlightened views of Lord Chatham, Lord Rockingham, Mr. Burke, Mr. Fox, and Mr. Pitt. One of the great distinctions of a free country, that of being governed by its ablest men, was at several periods of this reign entirely lost. The utmost confusion prevailed for the first ten years of this inauspicious system. Nothing indeed but the magnitude of the danger which the country incurred at the end of the American and the commencement of the French wars, prevented George the Third from ruling the country by the Jenkinsons and the Addingtons, and excluding the greatest of his subjects altogether from the councils of the state.

"Party has no doubt its evils; but all the evils of party put together would be scarcely a grain in the balance, when compared to the dissolution of

honorable friendships, the pursuit of selfish ends, the want of concert in council, the absence of a settled policy in foreign affairs, the corruption of separate statesmen, the caprices of an intriguing court, which the extinction of party connexion has brought and would again bring upon this country.

"I have gone over the story of those times, because it appears to me they are full of instruction and of warning."

We shall not here discuss the much-vexed question of the reviled peace of '63. Lord John Russell seems less disposed heartily to defend his ancestor's share in it, than any other transaction of his public career. But upon incidental points he clears away some doubt; and, in reference to the immediate cause of Pitt's resignation (the war with Spain) not having been the main ground of difference between him and the majority of the cabinet, has a remark which will probably be twisted into the service of matters under present discussion. Great have been the changes in public feeling since the Duke of Bedford's time; so great, that the promoter of a just war would be, now-a-days, much more in danger of being stoned than the negotiator of an unjust peace;—and, looking at this condition of popular feeling, we may fairly congratulate ourselves, without entering into the old dispute as between a Bute and a Chatham, on possessing a prime minister to whom the "most prudent policy" seems preferable to "the most daring," in everything which concerns the good understanding of England and France.

"He had avowed that, in his opinion, no peace ought to be concluded with France, until she consented to give up the fishery of Newfoundland, the chief nursery of her seamen. The Duke of Bedford, on the other hand, persuaded Lord Bute and the Duke of Newcastle that it was neither reasonable nor practicable to deprive France of the means of supplying her navy with seamen, by the encouragement and maintenance of her fisheries. The policy of Mr. Pitt was the most daring—that of the Duke of Bedford the most prudent. With the one course, joined to the haughty language of Mr. Pitt, nothing but the most complete destruction of her resources would have induced France to consent to peace: with the other, England greatly augmented her dominions, husbanded her resources, and gained at the same time a character for moderation."

"When the treaty arrived in London, Lord Granville, who after being the most turbulent, had become the most complying member of the cabinet, was sinking into the grave. Mr. Wood, the under secretary, brought him the treaty of peace. 'I found him so languid,' says this gentleman, 'that I proposed postponing my business for another time; but he insisted that I should stay, saying it could not prolong his life to neglect his duty. He then desired to hear the treaty read, to which he listened with great attention, and recovered spirits enough to declare the approbation of a dying statesman (I use his own words) on the most glorious war and the most honorable peace this nation ever saw.'

"But whatever might be the calm judgment of a statesman, the power of Lord Bute received a great blow from the signature of the peace of Paris. The conquering soldier could not bear to be stopped in his career; a nation proud of its victories bore with indignation the dismissal of the minister who had organized success, and the restoration of any part of its conquests to a defeated enemy. The Duke of Bedford was hissed in the streets of London; Lord Bute was everywhere reviled, as if he

had sacrificed for his own advantage all the fruits of victory and conquest.

This character of George Grenville may stand even side by side with that by Mr. Macaulay:

"He was bold and resolute in character, firm in maintaining his opinions, and little, perhaps too little, disposed to modify them for the sake of concert, or to renounce them when shown to be impracticable. Without the large conceptions of Mr. Pitt, he was equally removed from those lower views of interest which had turned Mr. Fox aside from the charge of the public weal to the care of his private fortune. Forming to himself a rule characteristic of his love of method, he resolved to spend no more money in the periods he held office than in those he was unsalaried, in order, as he explained it, that he might be above the temptations of place for the sake of luxury or enjoyment. His integrity was equal to that of Mr. Pitt. But it must be owned that his severe attacks on the prodigality of that minister brought to mind the fact that for many years he sat silent as treasurer of the navy, suffering profusion to go unrebuked. His subsequent censure partook somewhat of an 'envy of great Caesar.' He had been raised by Lord Bute to a cabinet office during the preparations for peace; had gone, from being secretary of state, to the post of first lord of the admiralty, because he disapproved of some of the terms allowed to France, and had declined to take the leading part in defence of the treaty in the house of commons against Mr. Pitt and his friends. His chief fault was that for which Mr. Burke has noted him, too great a reliance on the precedents on the file, and too obstinate an adherence to plans of government unwisely conceived and unfortunately pursued. This failing, again, arose in great part from a want of sympathy with the assertion of free principles, where no book could be quoted for his guidance. He could denounce with vehemence any failure of vigor, and glow with indignation against an exertion of power not warranted by law. But where the confines of legality and liberty had not been defined, he sided with authority; and when a formal decision had been made, he mistook the fiction of parliamentary omnipotence for a reality of the English constitution. His style of speaking was solid, argumentative, vigorous, but not exalted by fancy, like that of Mr. Pitt, nor quick and dexterous, like that of Mr. Fox, nor smooth and harmonious, like that of Lord Mansfield. Such was the new first lord of the treasury, and chancellor of the exchequer."

Another happy sketch of the unhappy Chatham administration, may remind us of the best touches of the same admirable master:

"Then was formed that famous ministry of Lord Chatham, in which Lord Chatham was a cipher; a ministry which overturned his whole plan of policy; persecuted Wilkes till they had nearly raised a rebellion in England; contradicted their supposed chief in every step, and then contradicted and disavowed each other; taxed America, with Mr. Conway in office, the repealer of the stamp act, and still the nominal leader of the house of commons; entered into a conflict with the electors of Middlesex, against the opinion of Lord Camden, their chancellor; and finally brought upon their heads the voice of Lord Chatham's thunder, when he in vain endeavored to compose the waves which his own *Æolus* had lashed into fury."

Every one knows the Duke of Bedford's celebrated interview with the king, which left his maj-

esty in convulsions, says Junius; in which the duke was brutal, says Burke; in which he covered the princess-mother with invectives, and threatened Lord Bute with the block, says Horace Walpole. Of this never-to-be-forgotten interview, Lord John Russell (from a letter of the duke to his son-in-law, and a memorandum written at the time to the same effect) supplies the following quiet account, which would seem to exhibit it, if in all respects correct, as one of the most ludicrous of the mares'-nests of history:

"The Duke of Bedford, angry at the manifest want of support from the court, asked for an audience of the king, before he left London for the summer. The interview took place on the 12th of June. The duke reminded his majesty of the terms on which the ministry had consented to resume their offices, and asked whether the promise made to them had been kept; whether the reverse was not the fact? whether Lord Bute had not been favored, and the friends of the ministry discountenanced! Finally, he besought the king 'to permit his authority and his favor to go together; and if the last could not be given to his present ministers, to transfer to others that authority which must be useless in their hands, unless so strengthened.' The king said little, except that he had not seen Lord Bute."

Of course Lord John Russell does not spare that terrible libeller of his ancestor, who promises to have the strange fate of continuing both anonymous and immortal. Who can wonder that any writer should have shrunk from avowing the infamy of the scandals of Junius, whatever sacrifice of another kind of fame it might imply? The hand may be a delicate one, its ruffles of the finest lace, its sword jewel-mounted and jewel-hilted; but if it has been mainly used in a dark alley, and in secret stabbings against life and honor, there are few who would care to own it!

Lord John Russell thus introduces and describes Junius:

"The war of parties was carried on during the last century in a manner somewhat different from the fashion of the present day. The houses of parliament did not allow their debates to be published. The imperfect and garbled reports which appeared in monthly miscellanies gave but a faint and distorted reflection of the actual contest of debate. The leading parties in the state, in order to obtain the verdict of the country, either wrote, or paid for, pamphlets and periodical writings setting forth their principles and their conduct. Sir Robert Walpole hired some indifferent authors; Lord Bolingbroke wrote himself in the 'Craftsman'; Ralph set up a paper at the desire of the Duke of Bedford; Dr. Johnson employed his pen in behalf of the ministry. In this state of things, an anonymous writer published some letters under various signatures in the 'Public Advertiser.' At first, these letters were of the usual description of such writings, bombastical and empty, much abuse without any proof, and great presumption without great talent. Lord Chatham was the chief object of the writer's extravagant invective, and Mr. Grenville the subject of his equally extravagant praise. Thus we have Lord Chatham described as 'a man purely and perfectly bad,' and then depicted as having 'arrived at that moment at which he might see himself within reach of the great object, to which all the artifices, the intrigues, the hypocrisy, and the impudence of his past life were directed.' Then, after an account of his conduct we have: 'These are but a few of the pernicious

practices by which a traitor may be known, by which a free people may be enslaved. But the masterpiece of his treachery, and the surest of answering all his purposes, would be, if possible, to foment such discord between the mother country and her colonies as may leave them both an easier prey to his own dark machinations. With this patriotic view, he will be ready to declare himself the patron of sedition, and a zealous advocate for rebellion.' Then, again, we have him portrayed as 'so black a villain;' and a comfortable reflection at the close, that although we have 'no Tarpeian rock,' 'yet we have impeachments: and a gibbet is not too honorable a situation for the carcass of a traitor.' Such was the style of the libeller before he had learnt to point his arrows; such was his respect for public services, and an honorable old age. Presently more pains were taken; the style became less inflated, and the matter less absurd; the author took the name of Junius, and suddenly attracted general notice.

"I need hardly vindicate the Duke of Bedford from the attacks of Junius. Lord Brougham, in his 'Statesmen of the Reign of George the Third,' has amply proved the baselessness of his calumnies. But the whole fabric deserves to be pointed out as a specimen of the taste and temper of those days. Let it be first observed, that the favorite topics of this writer were those from which a man of generous or even moderately good feelings would have shrunk. If he writes to George the Third, he bitterly reproaches him with the supposed dishonor of his mother. If he addresses the Duke of Grafton, he reminds him jestingly of the infidelity of his wife. If he chooses the Duke of Bedford for his butt, he brings to mind the sudden death of his only son, and calls public attention to the measure and mode of his private grief. To any writer moved solely by regard for his country, these topics would have been alien or distasteful. But it seems to have been the delight of this libeller to harrow the souls of those who were prominent in public life; and while he had not courage to fight with a sword in the open daylight, he had too much malignity to refrain from the use of the dagger, covered by a mask, and protected by the obscurity of the night. Nor can any excuse be found for this writer in the warmth of his ardor for public liberty. His zeal on that subject was wonderfully tempered by discretion. He viewed favorably the taxation of America, and dreaded as excessive innovation the disfranchisement of Gaton and Old Sarum. A false accusation gratified his rancor; the improvement of the constitution alarmed his caution.

"The habit of anonymous writing is apt to produce an absurd exaggeration in the language used towards statesmen. The writer can, on the one hand, derive no weight from his reputation for integrity or for knowledge; an attack without a name may be written by the most worthless and ignorant, as well as by the honestest and most learned of men. On the other hand, he feels none of that caution which arises from the consciousness, that while he fires his rifle, he is exposing his own person to his enemy. It is for these two reasons that we generally find anonymous writers so much more abusive than men who speak or write in their own names. The flaunting colors of the daub attract the eye of the vulgar; while the just harmony of a good portrait is valued only by those who love a true likeness."

There is much truth in that; and however widely on some points our estimate of Junius' talents and motives may differ from Lord John Russell's, we

have never doubted the cruel falsehood and wickedness of his imputations in this particular case. Compared with the innocent entries of the duke's journal, here authentically republished, the violence of the libeller should now, indeed, chiefly provoke a smile. Lord John Russell condescends to afford them this serious and sufficient answer :

"Such false drawing as that of Junius does much to corrupt the public judgment. It is of the utmost importance that a nation should have a correct standard by which to weigh the character of its rulers. But if the weak and the misguided are called 'traitors' and 'villains,'—still more, if purity of conduct is made the theme of invective, as much as notorious dishonesty, the good are discouraged, the bad are comforted, and the indolent opinion of the idle multitude confounds in one sweeping condemnation the most unblemished of patriots with the most greedy of demagogues and the most corrupt of courtiers.

"The special accusations against the Duke of Bedford may be soon disposed of. Indeed, they almost vanish when they are pressed into substance. For instance, that the duke had been beaten on a race-course. The fact was, that he had been assaulted by some Jacobite rioters, in the Jacobite county of Stafford, two years after the rebellion. Or, that he had been paid for the peace of Paris. The proof of this baseless fiction was, that the Duke of Marlborough had refused a bribe from Torcy during the Succession War! Or, thirdly, that he had shown less grief than he should have done for the death of his son. But who can sound the depths of a private sorrow? Or who will venture to affirm that a vote given at the India House, on a great public question, may not have been the vain attempt of an afflicted heart to break a single link in the chain of a continuous sorrow? I need not notice the low tale, that the Duke and Duchess of Bedford had sold the wardrobe of their son and daughter-in-law. These effects were given, as was the practice, to the immediate servants of Lord and Lady Tavistock, and sold by them for their own benefit. Indeed, there was nothing sordid in the duke's attention to his fortune. When his son had chosen a wife whom the duke approved, Walpole says, 'the duke asked no questions about fortune, but has since slipped a bit of paper into Lady Elizabeth's hand, telling her he hoped his son would live; but if he did not, there was something for her. It was a jointure of three thousand a year, and six hundred pin money.' He allowed his son eight thousand a year, and on his death increased the jointure of Lady Tavistock.

"It must be acknowledged, however, that Junius was a most accomplished libeller. Although he was no lawyer, and had but a smattering of constitutional knowledge, his statements on legal and constitutional questions are clear and plausible, his periods concise and harmonious; his epigram pointed, and his sarcasm exquisitely polished. These qualities, together with the proneness of mankind to believe the false, and doubt the true, sufficiently account for the great popularity of Junius :

'L'homme est de feu pour le mensonge ;
Il est de glace pour la vérité.'—La Fontaine.

"Mr. Fox never thought very highly of this writer; nor can his letters be regarded otherwise than as a disgraceful proof that considerable talents may be devoted to the most malignant slander, and that calumnies may be so elaborately contrived as to exist beyond the usual period of their ephemeral and loathsome life."

"Whither," asked Junius, the year before the duke died, "whither shall this unhappy old man retire? Can he remain in the metropolis? If he returns to Woburn, scorn and mockery await him. He must create a solitude round his estate, if he would avoid the face of reproach and derision." And, meanwhile, the unhappy old man was playing games of Quadrille, dining with the Catch Club, trifling with the Society of Dilettantes, enjoying *Ariana* at the Opera house, or *Thomas and Sally* at Drury Lane, seeing Master Townshend in *Cato*, or the Duke of York in *Lothario*, welcoming scorn and mockery that he might admire the Lady Macbeth of "incomparable Mrs. Yates," and avoiding faces of reproach and derision among the crowds that flocked to the benefit of Kitty Clive. Poor, unhappy old man!

But his memory may now be at rest. His distinguished descendant has worthily and nobly cleared it, of at least all baser matters of reproach; and closes his labors with this elegant tribute of contrast to Lord Chesterfield :

"Warm and eager in his disposition, of a social and cheerful temper, he devoted himself with ardor to political affairs, enjoyed with keen delight the playhouse, or the opera, and then turned with equal animation to see his oats carried, or join in a game of cricket. He was in many respects a great contrast to the Earl of Chesterfield. That accomplished and witty person was often right in his political views, and always pointed in the expression of his opinions. The Duke of Bedford was sometimes very right, and sometimes exceedingly wrong, but his study of the subject was always better than the language of his speeches. Lord Chesterfield endeavored to imitate the profligacy, the levity, the neglect of moral duties of the French nobility. The Duke of Bedford liked a jolly companion, and an athletic game, but was deeply attached to the religion of his country and the society of his own family. Lord Chesterfield endeavored, though in vain, to teach his son the arts of intrigue, and a tone of clever insincerity upon all subjects. The Duke of Bedford attained his utmost wishes when he saw his son married to a virtuous woman, and in the enjoyment of domestic happiness. The want of practical religion and morals which Lord Chesterfield held up to imitation, conducted the French nobility to the guillotine and emigration; the honesty, the attachment to his religion, the country habits, the love of home, the activity in rural business and rural sports in which the Duke of Bedford and others of his class delighted, preserved the English aristocracy from a flood which swept over half of Europe, laying prostrate the highest of her palaces, and scattering the ashes of the most sacred of her monuments."

We may apply to the spirit of this pleasing and pointed parallel what the writer himself happily says of Burke's partial character of Lord Rockingham—it is a portrait set in diamonds.

THREADING THE NEEDLE.

[In Mrs. Norton's "Scrap Book for 1847," Sharp's old print is thus illustrated by Lady Dufferin:]

"An deary me! what needles!—well, really I must say,
All things are sadly altered—(for the worse too) since my day!
The pins have neither heads nor points—the needles have no eyes,
And there's ne'er a pair of scissors of the good old-fashioned size!
The very bodkins now are made in fine new-fangled ways,
And the good old British thimble—is a dream of other days!
Now that comes of machinery!—I'm given to understand
That great folks turn their noses up, at all things 'done by hand,'
Altho' its easy proving to the most thick-pated dunce,
That things ar'n't done the better—for all being done at once.
I'm sure I often ponder, with a kind of awful dread,
On those bold 'spinning-jennies,' that 'go off, of their own head!'
Those power-ooms and odd machines,—those whizzing things with wheels,
That evermore 'keep moving!'—besides, one really feels
So superannuated-like, and laid upon the shelf—
When one sees a worsted stocking, get up, and knit itself!
"Ah! that comes of those Radicals! why, Life's a perfect storm,—
A whirlwind of inventions! with their 'Progress' and 'Reform!'
The good old days—the quiet times, that calmly used to glide,
Are changed into a steeple-chase,—a wild 'cross-country ride!
A loud view-holloa in our ears—away! away! we go;
A-levelling all distinctions, and a-mingling high and low:
All spurring on, with seats so tight, and principles so loose,
Whisk! over this old prejudice!—slap-bang! thro' that abuse!
No matter why,—no matter where! without a stop or hitch,
And nobody has time to help his neighbor in the ditch!
And then, what turns and changes! Good lack! I'd rather be
A joint-stool in a Pantomime,—than some great folks I see!
Because in Pantomimes, a stool may turn to anything,
You're not surprised, if chairs step out to dance a Highland fling!
"A coffee-pot perhaps becomes a mitre by-and-by,—
And everything is something else—and nobody asks why!
But there's a rage for questioning, and meddling now-a-days;
And what one *does*, don't matter half so much as what one *says*;
And a minister can't change his mind, without such stir and fuss,

That one would think the 'public voice' was some huge omnibus
Which takes you to a certain point, whereat you must remain,
Until the same old *Buss* may choose—to take you back again!
For, (odd enough,) in all this change, they keep some order still,
And when they turn,—turn all at once,—like soldiers at a drill;
But wont allow a public man, a private pironette,
When once his part of Harlequin, or Pantaloon, is set.
And that 's what makes their Pantomime so dull, and such a bore,
That *their* joint-stool must still remain—a joint-stool evermore.
"Now that comes of Newspapers! I know in my young days,
'Least said, and soonest mended,' was a maxim worthy praise,
But were I to give counsel to the Public—as a friend,
'Little said—and nothing written,' is the rule I'd recommend.
Such snapping-up—and setting down! Reporters, left and right!
All bent on pinning down a man *to lie*, in black and white!
Such raking up of Hansard! such flinging in one's face,
Any little 'lapsus linguae' that may once have taken place!
Such a-fending and a-proving,—and a-calling over coals,
As if it really mattered to our poor immortal souls,
That 'Thingumbob should think or say, on question so and so,
That foolish things he thought and said—some forty years ago!
There 's one thing in those papers, tho', I'm very glad to see,
That many more *old women* think very much like me:
I'm even told that certain dukes will echo back my groan,
And sigh for those dear golden days, when we 'left—well, alone!'"

TO A YOUNG PRINCESS.

[From Mrs. Norton's Scrap Book we copy some lines by the author to the portrait of the Princess of Hohenlohe Langenbourg, the Duchess of Kent's grandchild.]

A LOVELY, innocent, childlike face; with a happy smile and most artless grace!
Far away be the bitter hour, that shall wither, for her, life's blooming flower;
Glad be her heart for many a year, though her smile must lose part of its radiance clear,
And that floating hair must be twisted and curled, before she is fit for fashion's world!
A Princess' life, old gossips say, is nothing but one long holyday,—
But the life of the people of fashion I've known, seemed more laborious far than my own.
Toiling, racketing, visiting, shopping—in and out of their carriages popping—
Driving about, they scarcely know where—and as just as they get to Cavendish square,

Checking the coachman to set them down in a
totally different part of the town ;
Going to parties, breakfasts, and balls,—holding
bazaars, with charity-stalls ;—
Writing small *billets* all day long, to beg for a
pattern, or copy a song ;
Quarrelling, sneering, struggling, and fretting—
plotting, contriving, racing, and betting,—
Sowing the whirlwind, reaping the storm,—and
going to church on Sundays, for form.

" Sometimes a scheme, afloat in the town, turns
the whole populace upside down ;
Such as the Pageant, (a pretty thought,) which
back the days of Chivalry brought,
When the inconvenient rain came down on the
guests of the Marquis of Eglintoun,
And knights took shelter, like common fellows,
beneath the shade of their old umbrellas,
And the Marchioness fair, of Wortleberry, looked
peevish instead of looking merry ;
And some of the heroes in armor swore, that the
thing was a most confounded bore,
And that they were sorry (audacious elves !) they 'd
agreed to make tom-fools of themselves,
And thus exposed all Chivalry's flower, like
Cowper's rose, to be 'washed in a shower.'

" Or ' the Powder Ball,'—when Her Majesty sent,
to the Earl de Grey, to be ' Earl of Kent ;'
When you past your friend and brother by,—(who
had shaved his whiskers, and corked his
eye,)—
And said to some stranger—' How do you do !'—
because you could n't tell who was who ;
And every statesman, lord, and minister, was dressed
in something strange and sinister ;
And Peel and Russell had given their vote for such
an identical pattern of coat,
That Lord George *might* have said, if he *then* had
seen 'em, ' there was n't a shade to choose
between 'em.'
And men returned their pious thanks to Heaven,
for not having spindle-shanks,
Or bid their tailors not work by halves, but, making
their tights, add in the calves ;
And every one was frantic to know, in what sort
of dress they ought to go,
For very few of them yet had heard of that ' ro-
coco' monarch, Edward the Third ;
And it really seemed as if something sly had been
pleasantly planned by Her Majesty,
To furnish her subjects' empty pates with a few
of the great historical dates.

" But except when events like these ' come off,'
the world of fashion is to me enough ;
The ladies drive to Howell & James, and call for
French silks with affected names,
And they tell the languishing lady's maid, that
their gayety's ' all for the good of trade ;'
And loop their petticoats up with grace, with a
heathenish lot of Cardinal's lace ;
Till memory leaves you quite in the lurch,—and
you seem to stand in St Peter's church,—
And the worst and most foolish woman there,—
with her thoughts the farthest from praise
and prayer,—
In spite of herself, brings visions dim, of the
swinging censer and nasal hymn,
And the little choristers, one by one, passing out
of the southern sun,

Into the dark cool marble dome, where the stranger
wonders at mighty Rome !

" Then, in Hyde Park, they ' take the air,' with a
languid yawn and a quiet stare,
While the same old faces cross their way, they 've
seen for many and many a day ;
For habits are governed by certain rules, in the
School of Fashion, like other schools ;
For instance, whatever is wrong or right, your
footmen *must* be of an equal height.
Match them exactly ; John or Jim must n't be fat,
if Thomas is slim :
And Samuel should n't be over tall, if Richard is
five foot nothing at all.

And when parties and fancy-balls are given, it's
as settled as anything under Heaven,
That nothing shall be, which gives any pain to the
Ladies Loud, or the Ladies Blane :
For the Countess of Bustle is hot and proud,—and
a violent woman is Lady Loud,—
And they cannot permit that *their* daughters should
be, ' share alike' with the rest of society.

Lady Magnolia Loud is pretty, and Lady Amelia
Blane is witty,
And God made them quite of a different race, from
other young ladies,—who know their
place ;
For nothing can be more flatly humble ; more will-
ing to polk, to valse, to tumble,
Exactly according to word of command, than the
rest of the young obsequious band.

If it were Mrs Tomkins of Stroud, instead of the
Countess Bustle or Loud,
They would call her a vulgar, noisy woman ;—but
such a decision were superhuman,
When the lady on whom they pass an opinion, is
queen of a part of Fashion's dominion.
Heavens ! the parties and popularity, they might
risk by even a jocularly,
Levelled at people ' in certain quarters,' (to whom
the rest of the world are martyrs !)
What easy sympathy seems to pierce their hearts,
for women both false and fierce,
While the joys and sorrows of lesser people might
be cried in vain from the village steeple.

The bare idea that a very fine lady should find her
sunny path grow shady—
The bare idea of a tear in her eye, or a real un-
doubted anxiety—
Is met by a sort of commiseration, that I own has
my blankest admiration,
When I see what suffering claims in vain, the pity
won by affected pain."

A LETTER from Munich, in the *Gazette de Cologne*,
mentions that for some time the state of Prince Met-
ternich's health has caused serious apprehension.
He engages in no business, and confines his official
activity to conversations. Some time ago it was
reported that the friends of Prince Metternich deemed
it prudent to watch his condition.

THE *Morning Post* contradicts, on authority, a
report in the French papers that Prince Louis Na-
poleon Bonaparte was about to marry Miss Burdett
Coutts.

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